

THE CROW



J. O'BARR





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I N T R O D U C T I O N

IN A LONELY PLACE

ONE DAY YOU ARE GOING TO LOSE EVERYTHING YOU HAVE. NOTHING WILL PREPARE YOU FOR THAT DAY. NOT FAITH... NOT RELIGION... NOTHING. WHEN SOMEONE YOU LOVE DIES, YOU WILL KNOW EMPTINESS... YOU WILL KNOW WHAT IT IS TO BE COMPLETELY AND UTTERLY ALONE. YOU WILL NEVER FORGET AND NEVER EVER FORGIVE. THE LONELY DO NOT USUALLY SPEAK AS COMPLETELY AND INTIMATELY AS JAMES O'BARR DOES HERE IN THIS BOOK - SO, IF ANYTHING, AT LEAST TAKE THIS LESSON FROM THE CROW: THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE TO LOSE.

IF YOU ARE SOMEONE WHO HAS NOTHING TO LOSE, THEN YOU ARE ALREADY HERE... AND YOUR LESSON IS A MUCH MORE DIFFICULT ONE.

I HAVE SAT NEXT TO MY FRIEND JAMES THROUGH MANY COMIC BOOK CONVENTIONS AND I'VE LISTENED TO HIS HALF-TRUTH ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS LIKE: "WHERE DID YOU GET THE IDEA FOR THE CROW?" AND "WHY DID YOU DO THIS STORY?" HE WOULD ALWAYS SAY SOMETHING ABOUT IT BEING BASED ON A TRUE STORY - SOMETHING HE READ IN THE NEWSPAPER ABOUT A YOUNG COUPLE MURDERED IN DETROIT, OR HE WOULD SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE INFLUENCES OF GREAT COMIC BOOK ARTISTS LIKE WILL EISNER OR VAUGHN BODE, AND SOMETIMES HE WOULD TALK ABOUT ALL THE INSPIRATIONAL MUSICAL INFLUENCES FROM JOY DIVISION AND THE CURE TO BIG BLACK AND PITCH SHIFTER. SO MANY STORIES AND EXPLANATIONS, BUT ONLY HALF OF THE WHOLE STORY. JAMES DID THIS BOOK BECAUSE HE DIED INSIDE, BUT FOUND HE WAS STILL BREATHING. THE CROW COMES FROM SOME LONELY VOID FAR BEYOND PAIN, SORROW, AND WORDS. THIS BOOK YOU ARE HOLDING WAS A PLACE FOR JAMES TO PUT ALL THE RAGE AND ANGER HE FELT AT HAVING SOMEONE HE LOVED TORN AWAY... AND IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO FIND ORDER AND JUSTICE WHERE THERE IS NONE... FOR SOME THINGS THERE IS NO FORGIVENESS... ABSOLUTELY NONE. THAT HARD FACT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO LEARN TO LIVE WITH. THE EVENT - THE SPLIT SECOND OF TIME THAT BROUGHT YOU TO THIS LONELY PLACE - CANNOT BE FORGIVEN, NO MATTER HOW INEVITABLE IT WAS. IT TOOK AWAY THE FUTURE AND IT ENDED EVERYTHING, EXCEPT FOR THIS: THE EMOTIONAL INERTIA OF A RELATIONSHIP. THAT IS FOREVER AND IT IS ALL THAT YOU HAVE LEFT. LEARN TO LIVE WITH THAT. INFLUENCE IT. ACCESS IT. JAMES WROTE A LOVE LETTER CALLED "THE CROW." THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LOVE LETTER I HAVE EVER READ... A DREAM, A VISION, AND A REAL PLACE TO RECOVER SOMETHING THAT WAS LOST.

YOU WILL FIND A QUOTE IN A. A. ATTANASIO'S AFTERWORD WHICH READS, "THE HAND IS NO DIFFERENT FROM WHAT IT CREATES." THERE IS NO INTRODUCTION MORE FITTING FOR THE CROW. THIS BOOK IS JAMES' CEREMONY... A MESSAGE TO YOU AND ME. LISTEN CLOSELY...

-JOHN BERGIN
KANSAS CITY 1993

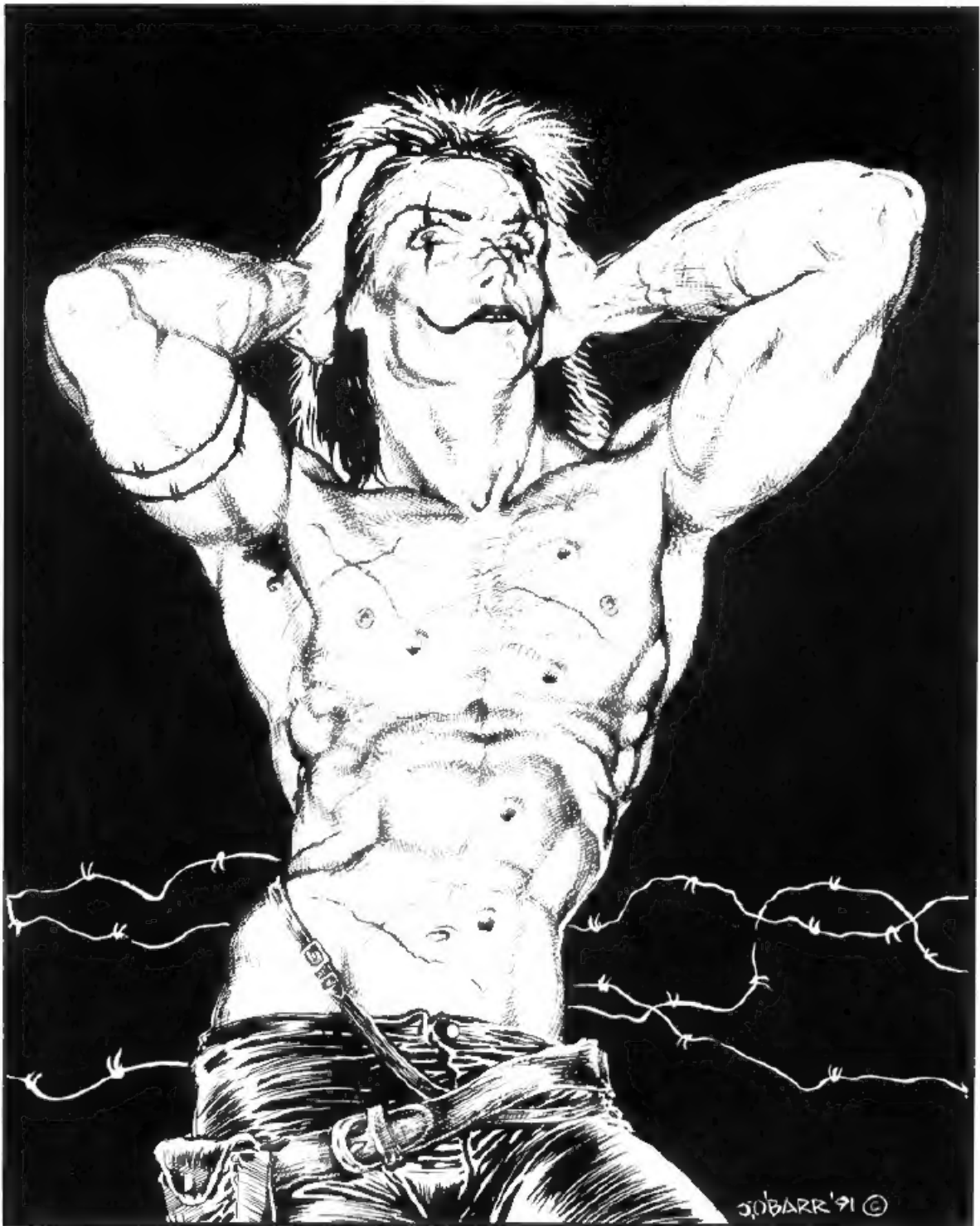
IN MEMORY OF
BRANDON LEE



YOU'LL BE SADLY MISSED.
LOVE, JAMES

LAMENT

. PAIN & FEAR .



PAIN

A YEAR AGO... A COLD OCTOBER NIGHT...
A BROKEN DOWN CAR ON A DIRT ROAD...
A MAN... A GIRL... MADNESS... PAIN... AND THE SHADOWS...
MY GOD, THE SHADOWS...

FEAR

HE SCREAMS AND SCREAMS AND POUNDS HIS HEAD
AGAINST THE WALL UNTIL WAILING PHANTOM FIRETRUCKS
PACES ACROSS HIS VISION.

PAIN, PAIN IS ALL HE WANTS.
AND HATE, YES HATE.

WE SHALL NEVER FORGET AND NEVER FORGIVE.

AND NEVER EVER FEAR.
FEAR IS FOR THE ENEMY.
FEAR AND BULLETS.

INERTIA



GOT THE
TOSHIBA MAN
EDDIE PAYS A
HUNDRED FOR
TOSHIBA...

I IN THE ROCK
TONITE MAN.

MAKE ME PUKE,
THESE FOLKS...
CAINT FEED THEY
KIDS BUT THEY
GOT TOSHIBA...

NOW
JONES
TRANSFER
GOT TOSHIBA..

YESSIR, I
BE IN THE
ROCK BIG-
TIME!

EH..?

WHAT THE
HELL?







MAN YOU MUST BE
DUSTED NOT TO FEEL
THAT..



PAIN?

I KNOW PAIN
AT THE MOLECULAR
LEVEL ..

...IT PULLS AT MY
ATOMS

...SINGS TO
ME IN AN
ALPHABET
OF FEAR...



I AM THE BOILING
MAN...



.. COME TO BREAK
THE BONES OF
YOUR SINS, MEAT
PUPPET...



TRY
AGAIN?

.. I.. I THINK
I'LL PASS..



TEBD AND THE OTHERS
WHERE ARE THEY?
SHELBY THE GIANT DIDN'T
KNOW.. HE SAID YOU
WOULD.

SHELBY WOULDN'T
ROLL ON ME, MAN..

OH HE TOLD

IT TOOK
THREE
DIGITS
BUT HE
TOLD..

YOU LYIN'.

I WOULD HAVE
BROUGHT THE FINGERS
AS DOCUMENTATION BUT
HE HAD TO EAT THEM ALSO.

OH MAN, TEBD KILL ME
SURE!!! HE KILL ME
SURE IF I TOLD!!!

FINGERS
OR
TOES?



OK! OK! OK! I AINT SEEN T BIRD OR TINTIN IN WEEKS BUT TOM TOM'S DOWN ON GRATIOT AND TEN. TOP HAS A PLACE AT THE HOTEL RENO ON SCHAEFER.

- FUN BOY IN THE COUNTRY TILL THE 27TH...

- YOU GONNA KILL ME NOW?



WHY MR. JONES, I ALREADY COUNT YOU AMONG THE DEAD.



LOOK! T'S A FULL MOON...

THAT'S A STREET LIGHT GHOST MAN!



IT WAS A FULL MOON THAT NIGHT, TOO...

WELL D. DON, MAN.



TELL THEM I'M COMING, MR. JONES.



MR. YVES?

YES SIR

ARE THERE SPOTS IN A LEOPARD'S EYES, ALSO?

JOBARR



ORDINARY NOCTURNE

One breath tears operatic rents in these partitions
Destroys the pivots of eroded roofs.
Dispels the limits of the hearth,
Makes casements disappear

Along the vine I came,
Using a gargoyle as a footrest
And into this carriage which shows its age
In convex windowpanes. In rounded panels,
In torturous upholstery

Hearse of my lonely sleep
Shepard's cart of my stupidity
The vehicle spins on the grass of an overgrown highway.
In a blemish high on the right window
Revolve pale lunar fictions, breasts and leaves.

A very dark green and a very dark blue blot out the image.
We unhitch and unharness beside a patch of gravel

- Here we will wait for storms, for Sodoms and Solymans,
For wild beasts and armies

(Postion and dream horses will ride on
through more dense and suffocating groves,
to sink me to my eyelids in the silken spring.)

- And drive ourselves off, whipped through splashing water
And spaled drinks, to roll on the barking of bulldogs

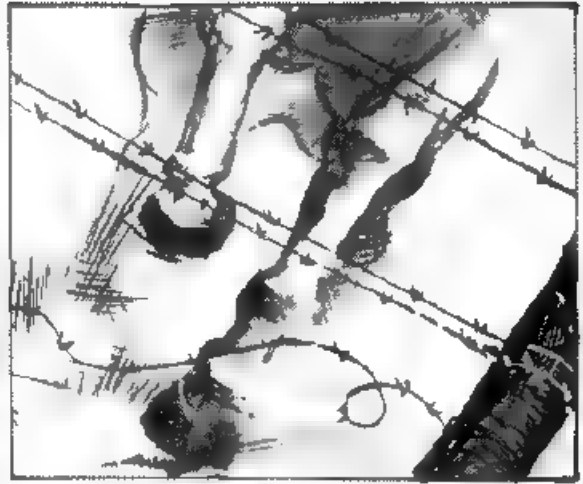
One breath dispels the limits of the hearth

- Arthur Rimbaud

shattered in the heau











THE CROW

BOOK ONE
PAIN

J.O'BARR



STILL SO STILL, IN THE CITY TONIGHT,
TWELVE O'CLOCK TICK TOCK,
WHEN ALL THAT'S GOOD SLINKS
AWAY LIKE A BEATEN DOG AND THE
BLACK BLACK SHADOWS ARE ALIVE
WITH THE DEAD TWISTED POETRY
IN BROKEN ENGLISH, FLESH AND
BLOOD AND STARING FACES..

SO GREY AND DESPAIRING, STRONG
AS STEEL BUT COLLAPSED INSIDE,
THE CROW LAUGHS UNDER A
STREET LIGHT, A VODOO SMILE OF
ONE WHO LIVED AND DIED AND
STILL YET LIVES...

HE MAKES HIS WAY HOME WHILE
HE CAN BE SHAPELESS IN THE DARK
AND PAINT HIS FACE IN THE COLOURS
OF JOY.

TONIGHT HELL SENDS AN ANGEL
BEARING GIFTS..

PART ONE

WHITE HEAT

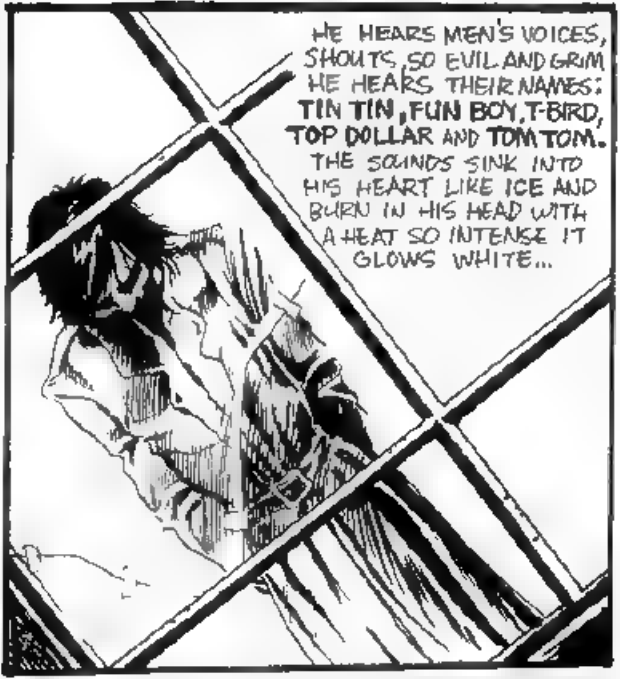




IN THE CITY, IN THE GHETTO
ON A DEAD END STREET, IN
A FORGOTTEN HOUSE...
A SHAPE A MAN HE STARES
OUT AN UPSTAIRS WINDOW,
UNMOVING, YET SEEING NOTHING,
LIFELESS AND SICK,
SLUMPED IN DESPAIR. HE
IS LISTENING TO SOUNDS,
TO VOICES. VOICES THAT
HAVE BEEN GONE FOR A
YEAR, BUT STILL RING SO
LOUDLY..



HE HEARS GUNSHOTS, A GIRL CRY-
ING.. SOBBING AND BEGGING.
HE COULD NOT HELP HER BUT NOW
HE CAN NOT REMEMBER WHY..



HE HEARS MEN'S VOICES,
SHOUTS, SO EVIL AND GRIM.
HE HEARS THEIR NAMES:
TIN TIN, FUN BOY, T-BIRD,
TOP DOLLAR AND TOM TOM.
THE SOUNDS SINK INTO
HIS HEART LIKE ICE AND
BURN IN HIS HEAD WITH
A HEAT SO INTENSE IT
GLOWS WHITE...



HEY, TIN TIN WE
HERE 'JUS' LIKE AH
SAID! WAIT TILL YA
SEE WHAT RATSO'S
GOT, TIN!

WHAT CHA GOT
RATSO MORE
DIRTY PITCHERS?







HELLO T N TIN..
REMEMBER ME?

..IT'S A CHILLY OCTOBER NIGHT
BUT TIN TIN'S FLUSH WITH HEAT..

PART TWO
NEW DAWN FADES







"THE PLACE IS REALLY STARTING TO SHAPE UP, ISN'T IT, ERIC?"



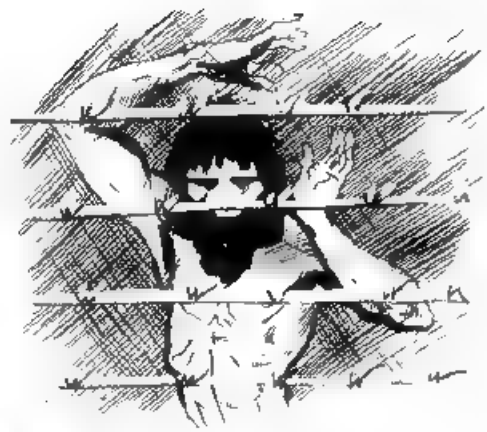
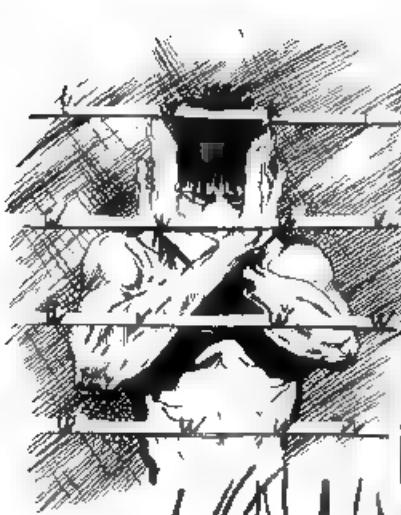
"OH SURE, FOURTEEN MORE COATS OF PAINT AND THE HOUSING AUTHORITY MIGHT APPROVE IT!!"



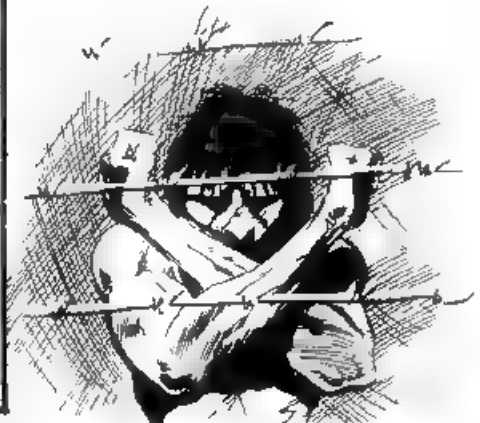




THERE IS A MAN..



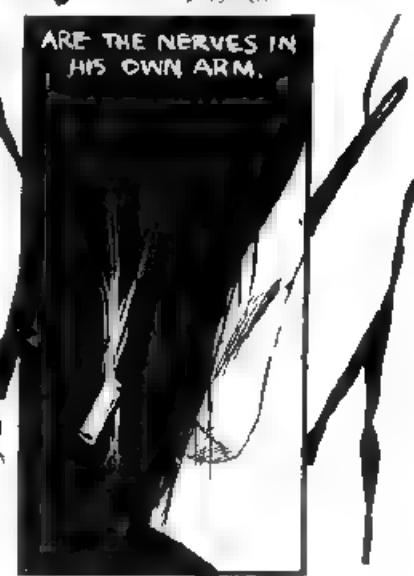
PLAYING A VIOLIN..



AND THE STRINGS..



ARE THE NERVES IN HIS OWN ARM.



A TWISTED SOUL-
THE MORTAR...

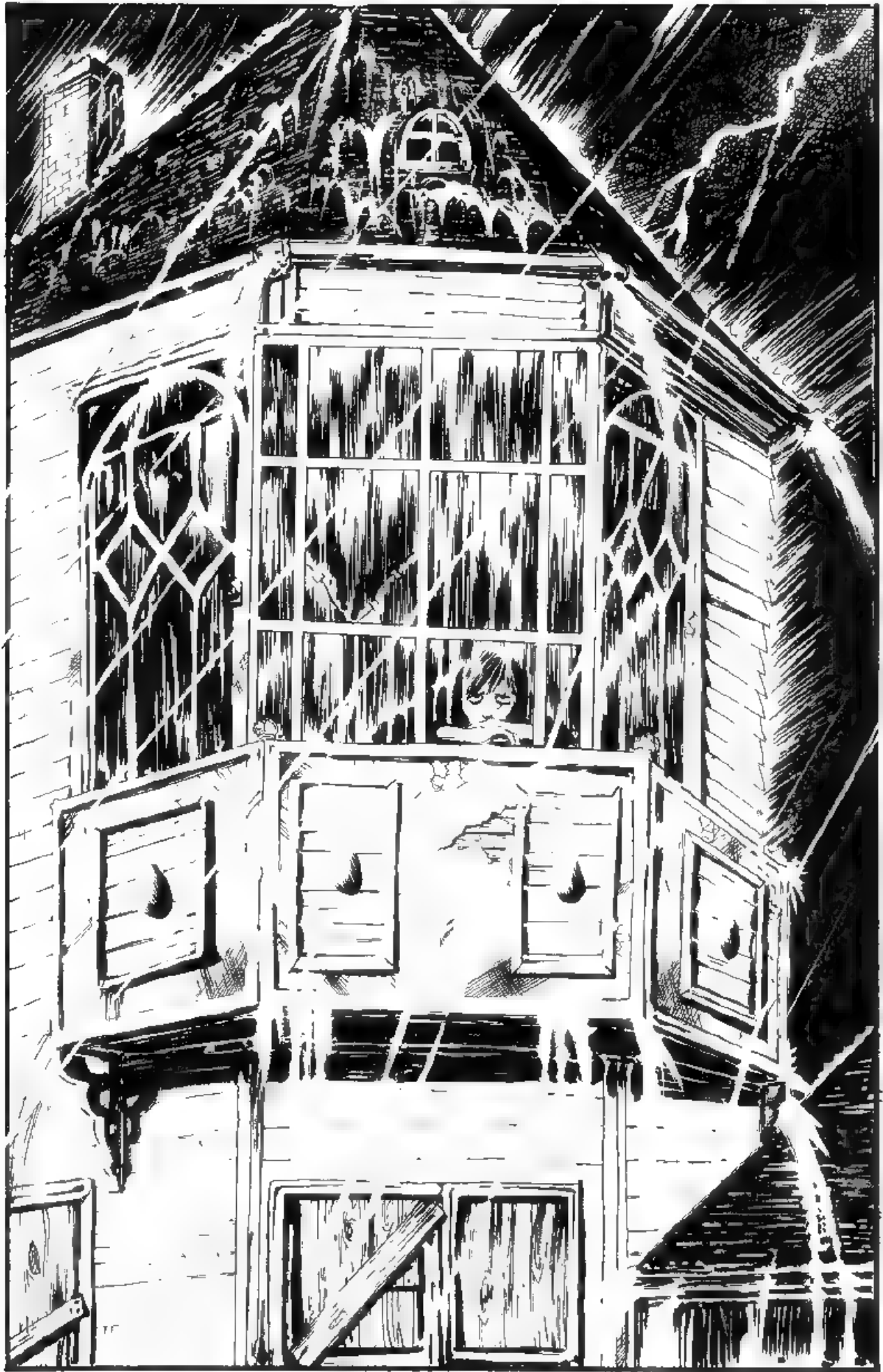
DESPAIR THE
BRICKS...

DON'T LOOK,
ERIC! DON'T
LOOK!!

TO BUILD A TEMPLE
TO SADNESS.

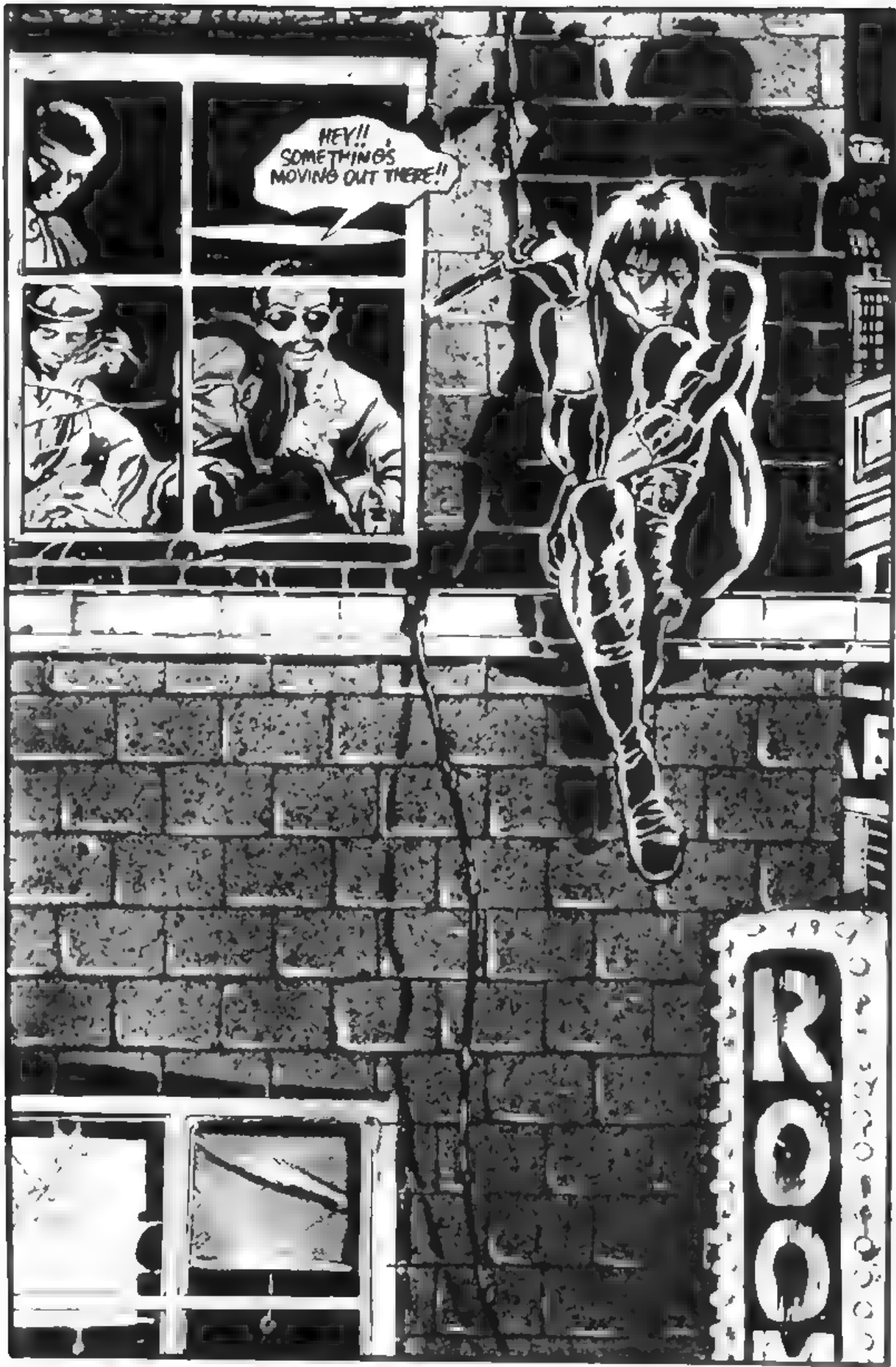
HE TIES A
SPENT SHELL IN
HIS HAIR.

"NUMBER
ONE," HE
SAYS.









HEY!!
SOMETHINGS
MOVING OUT THERE!!

ROOM









MAD JACK.. YOU SPORT A VEST ALSO! NO HONOR AMONG THIEVES?

I GONNA CAP YOU, MAN..

CLICK



TING

YOU'VE GOT TO HIT ME FIRST, JACK.

BOOM



DOWN WITH THE LAMBS, UP WITH THE LARK, RUN TO BED CHILDREN, BEFORE IT GETS DARK!



WHEN SORROWS COME, THEY COME NOT SINGLE SPIES, BUT IN BATTALIONS.

I'VE ALLIES IN HEAVEN, JACK, I'VE COMRADES IN HELL..

SAY HELLO FOR ME...

BOOM



SPLAK



WELL, WELL, TOP.. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE STILL WASTING GOOD AIR...



THE KILL

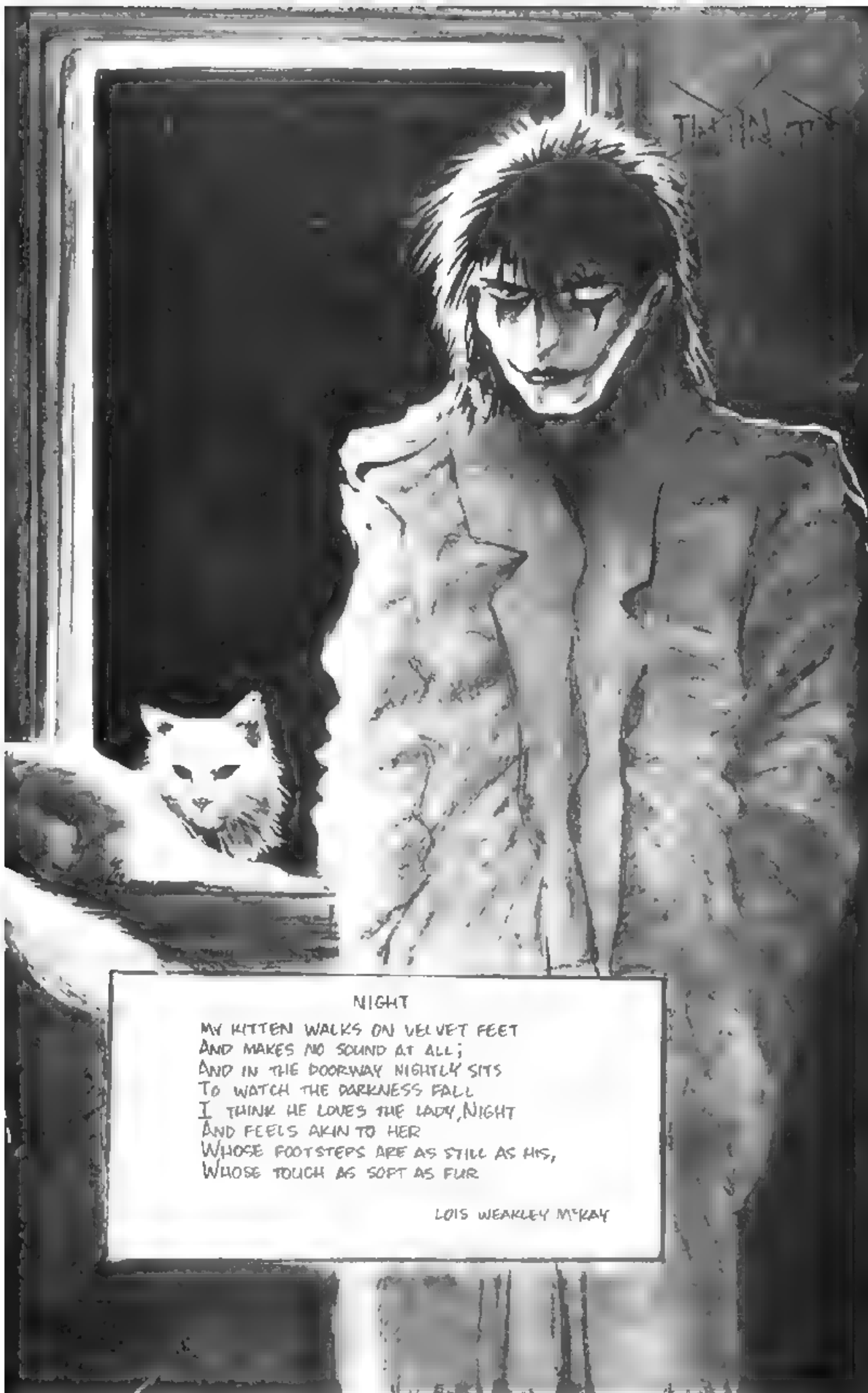
DO YOU REMEMBER?
LOOK CLOSE, TOP.







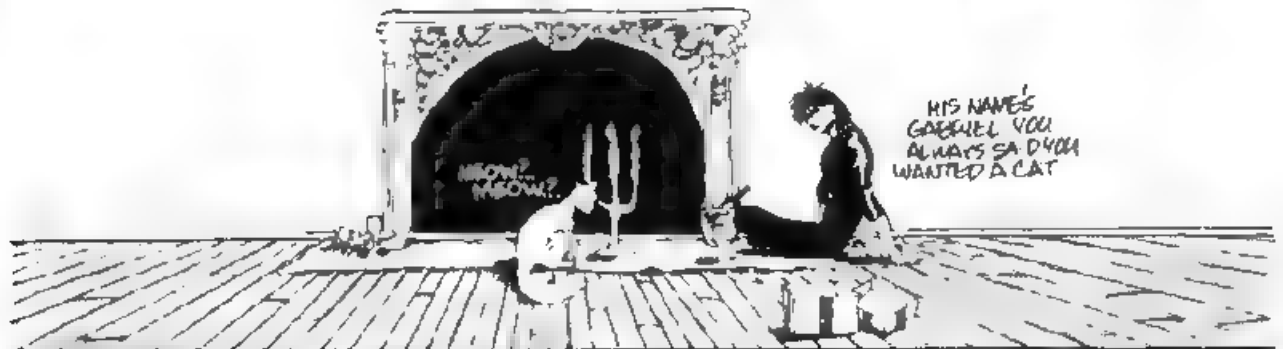
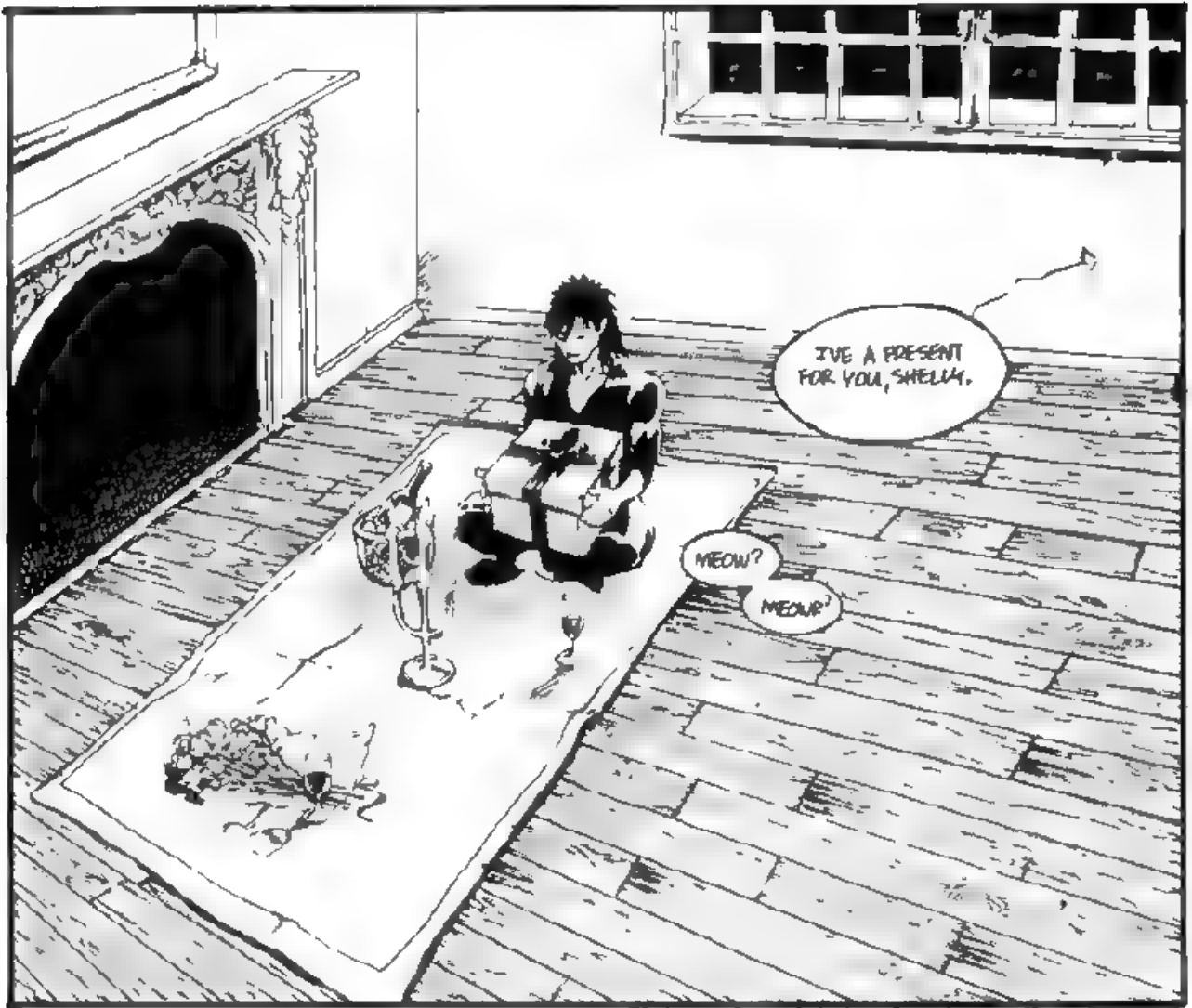




NIGHT

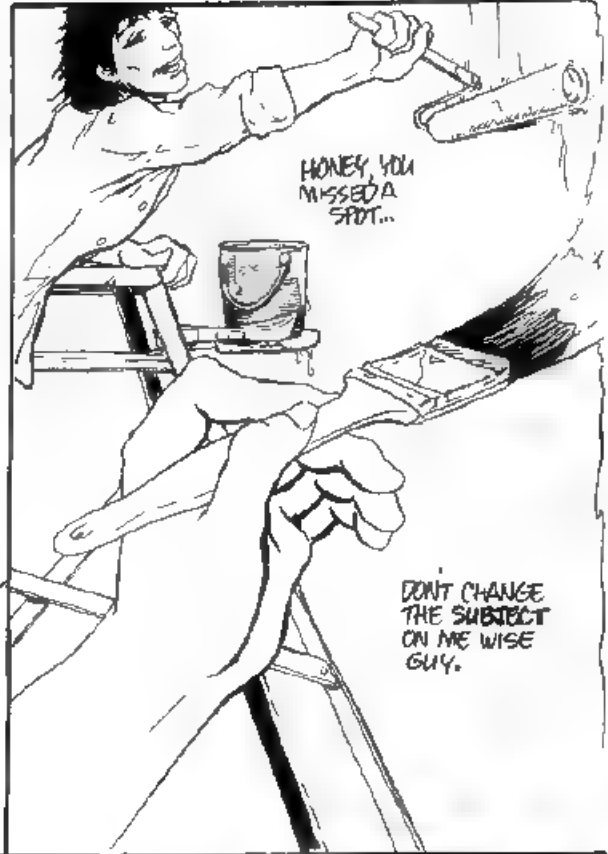
MY KITTEN WALKS ON VELVET FEET
AND MAKES NO SOUND AT ALL;
AND IN THE DOORWAY NIGHTLY SITS
TO WATCH THE DARKNESS FALL
I THINK HE LOVES THE LADY, NIGHT
AND FEELS AKIN TO HER
WHOSE FOOTSTEPS ARE AS STILL AS HIS,
WHOSE TOUCH AS SOFT AS FUR

LOIS WEAKLEY M'KAY



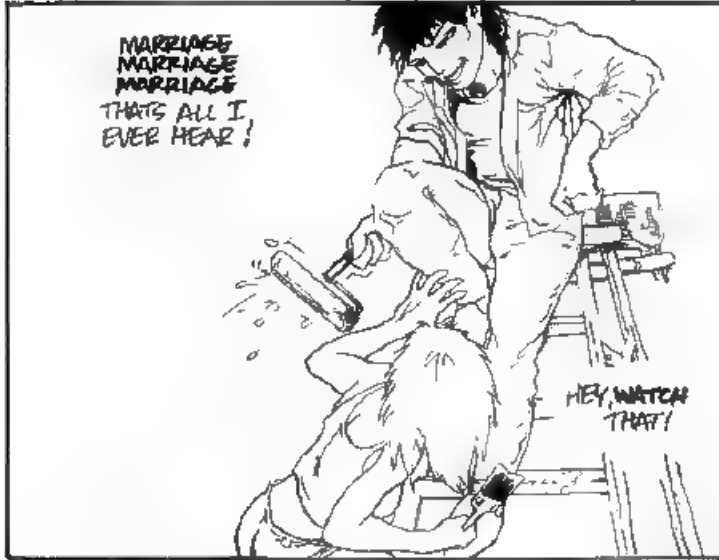


SO ERIC, NOW THAT THIS OLD HOUSE IS SEMI-HABITABLE ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE AN HONEST WOMAN OF ME?



HONEY YOU MISSED A SPOT...

DONT CHANGE THE SUBJECT ON ME WISE GUY.



MARRIAGE MARRIAGE MARRIAGE THATS ALL I EVER HEAR!

HEY, WATCH THAT!



OH YEAH? OR WHAT?

OR YOU'RE CUT OFF! PPHHFT!!



WILL THIS GET ME BACK ON YOUR GOOD SIDE?



ERIC! YOU GOT MY RING!!



OH, ERIC!! SHELLY..OFF..



WE'RE GETTING MARRIED!
WE'RE GETTING MARRIED!

IF I SURVIVE THIS...





WHERE
THE TEETH
OF MADNESS
JUMP, JUMP
DANCE AND
SING...





ERIC HEY,
ERIC...



YOU DONT
WANT TO SEE
THIS AGAIN, BOY.
LET'S GO...

OK, HERE'S
WHERE YOU
SMILE.

NOW THE
ETERNAL LOVE
PART...

CLICK

IDIOT.





NEVER
LISTEN.





NICE SUIT, EH KID?

SOBARR 10

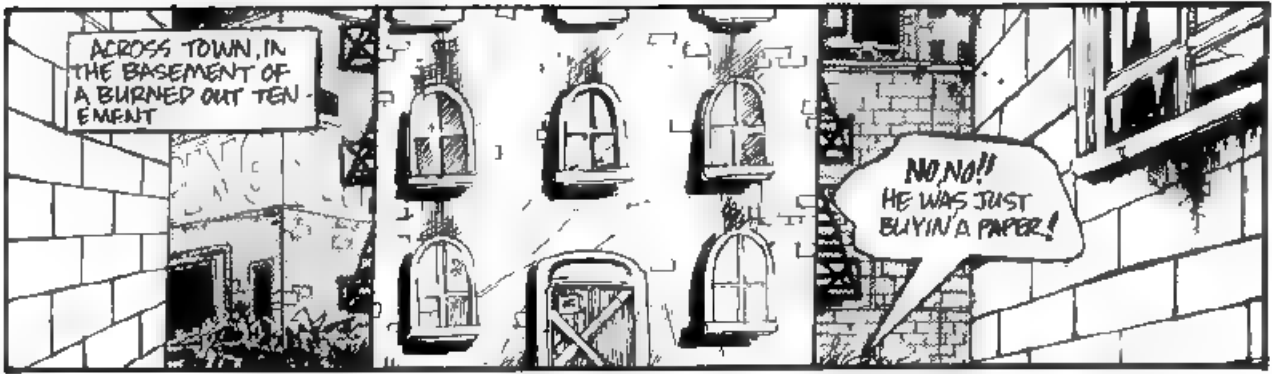


ERIC SCREAMS AND SCREAMS AND POUNDS HIS HEAD AGAINST
THE WALL UNTIL PHANTOM FIRE TRUCKS RACE ACROSS HIS VISION.
ALL HE WANTS IS PAIN.
PAIN AND HATE
YES, HATE.
BUT NEVER FEAR. FEAR IS FOR THE ENEMY.
FEAR AND BULLETS.

THE CROW

BOOK TWO
FEAR





ACROSS TOWN, IN THE BASEMENT OF A BURNED OUT TENEMENT

NO, NO!! HE WAS JUST BUYIN' A PAPER!



QUIT YER CRVIN, RETARD, WE SEEN YA TALKIN' TA PEACE OFFICAH DAVIES, JUST CUZ YA GOT THE DOWNS SYNDRUM DONT MEAN YA KIN ACT STUPID WITH US...

I DOES BELIEVE HE'S LYIN', SKANK.



I THINK HE ROLLED US FER CHECKIN' IN GREENS MARKET..

NO! NO!

WE GONNA HAPTA CUT YA, RETARD.

I LOVE IT WHEN THEY BEG!

NO! NO! NO! I DIDN'T! I SWEAR!

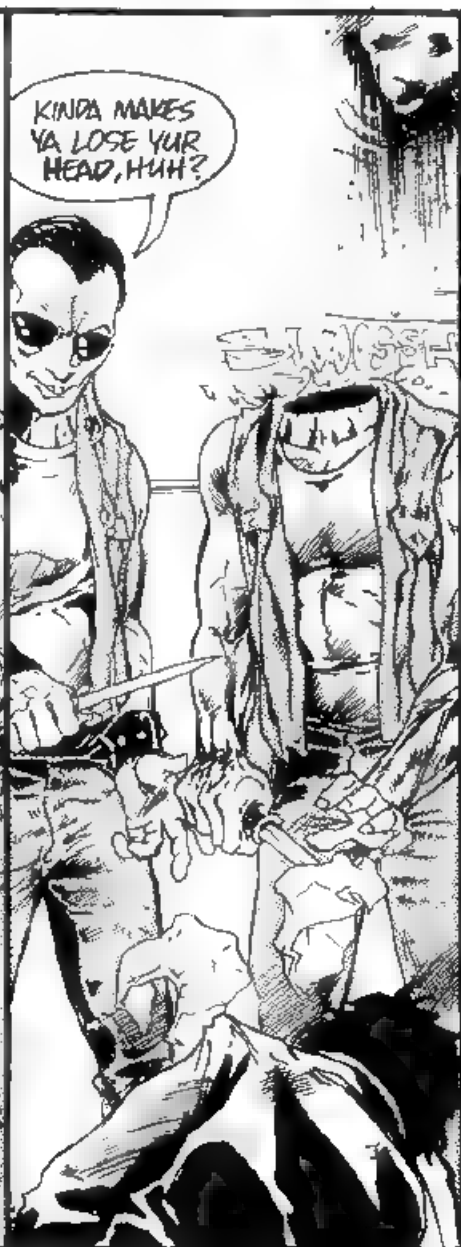
PLEASE! HE JUST BOUGHT A PAPER!!

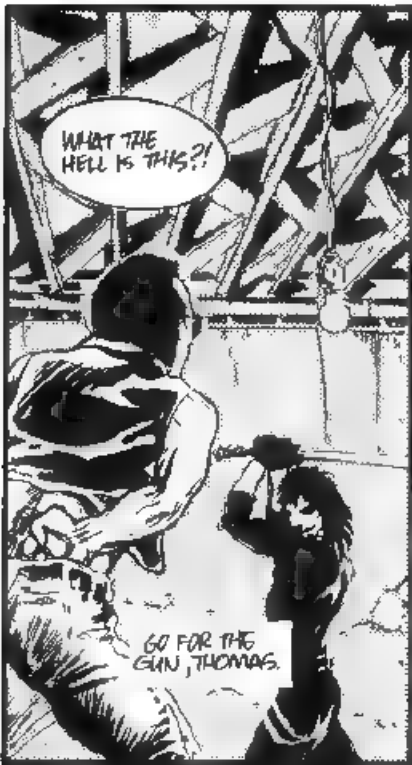


SO, NIGHT SLIPS OVER THE CITY, LIKE A WHORE TO HER KNEES, AND THE BUILDINGS STOOD LIKE EMPTY SYRINGES. HERE, HERE EVIL CENTRIFUGES INTO A WHIRLPOOL OF CRUELTY AND THE ONLY BREATH DRAWN IS BY...



DEAD SOULS





JESUS
CHRIST
WALKS
INTO A
HOTEL



HE HANDS
THE INNKEEPER
THREE NAILS AND
ASKS



CAN
YOU PUT
ME UP FOR
THE NIGHT?



WATCH YOUR
STEP, TOM TOM...





THINK

THOSE ARE MY BOOTS OVER THERE.

TOM TOM, A YEAR AGO YOU HELPED KILL A MAN AND A WOMAN. THERE WAS NO MONEY BUT YOU TOOK A RING SHE HAD ON.



DO YOU REMEMBER?



A RING? A RING.. YEAH A MAN AND A WOMAN...



YOU'RE HIM, AREN'T YOU??!

I AM.



BUT I SAW YOU DIE...



AS YOU SEE YOUR OWN DEATH BEFORE YOU NOW?

T BIRD WAS ON TOP OF HER...

SHE WAS SCREAMING AND CRYING.. I WANTED HER TO SHUT UP.. I KICKED HER...

SHE SCREAMED AND SCREAMED... AND I KEPT ON KICKIN' HER UNTIL HER FACE WAS ALL BLOODY. AN THEN, TEBIRD SHOT HER...



... HE SHOT HER IN THE HEAD AN BLOOD SPLASHED ALL OVER MY PANTS...

MY FEET ARE COLD... CAN I HAVE MY BOOTS?

YOU'LL BE ASLEEP IN A MINUTE TOM TOM WHERE IS THE RING?



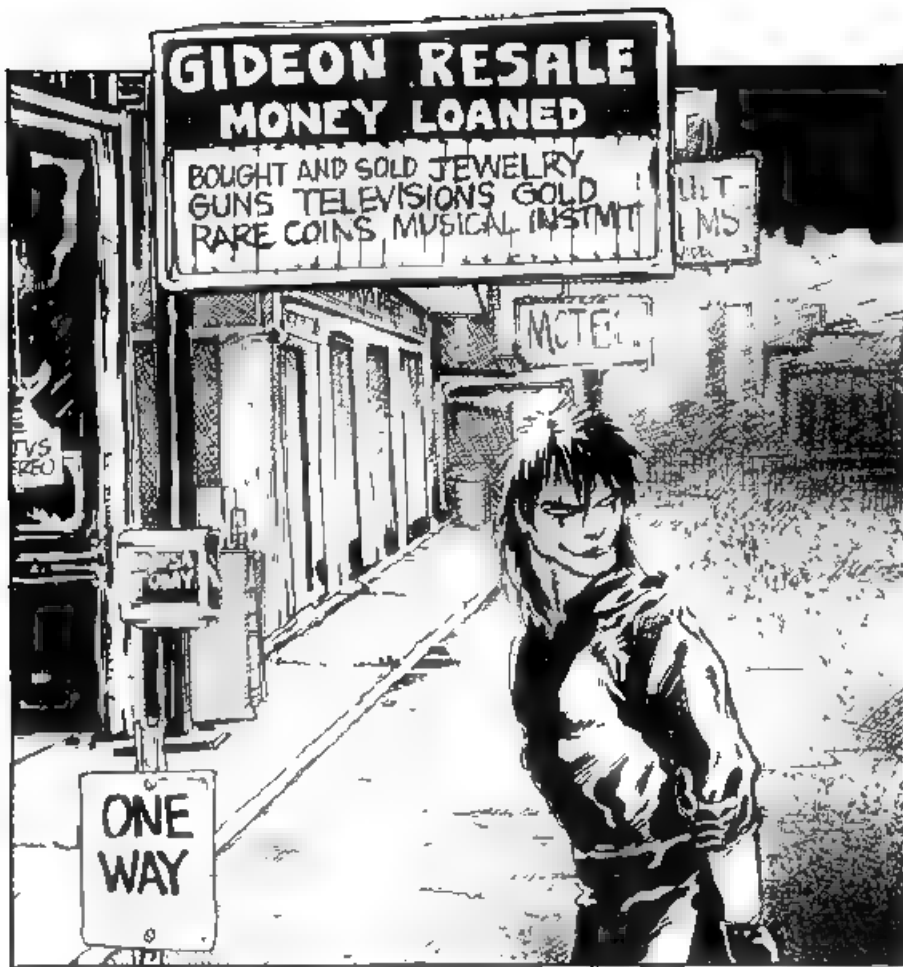
THE RING.. THE RING.. TEBIRD ALWAYS SOLD THAT STUFF DOWN ON GRATIOT... GIDEON'S PAWN... I'M COLD...

CAN I GO TA SLEEP NOW?

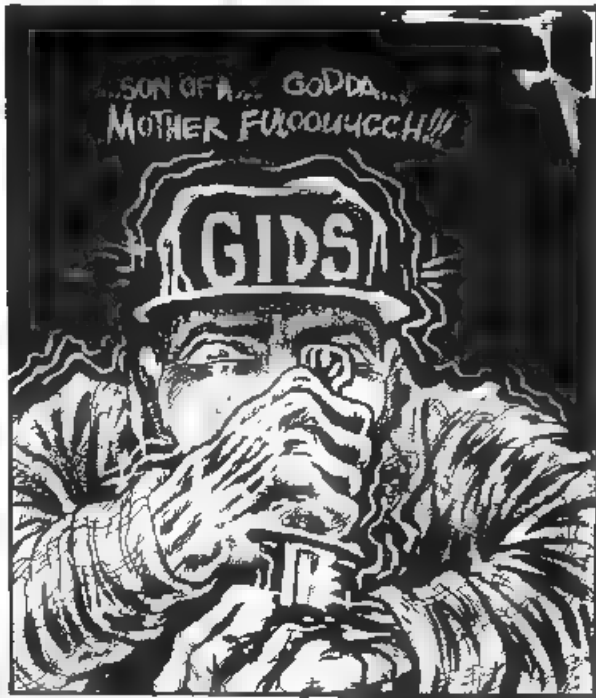
SLEEP NOW.

HOW WONDERFUL IS DEATH DEATH AND HIS BROTHER SLEEP.

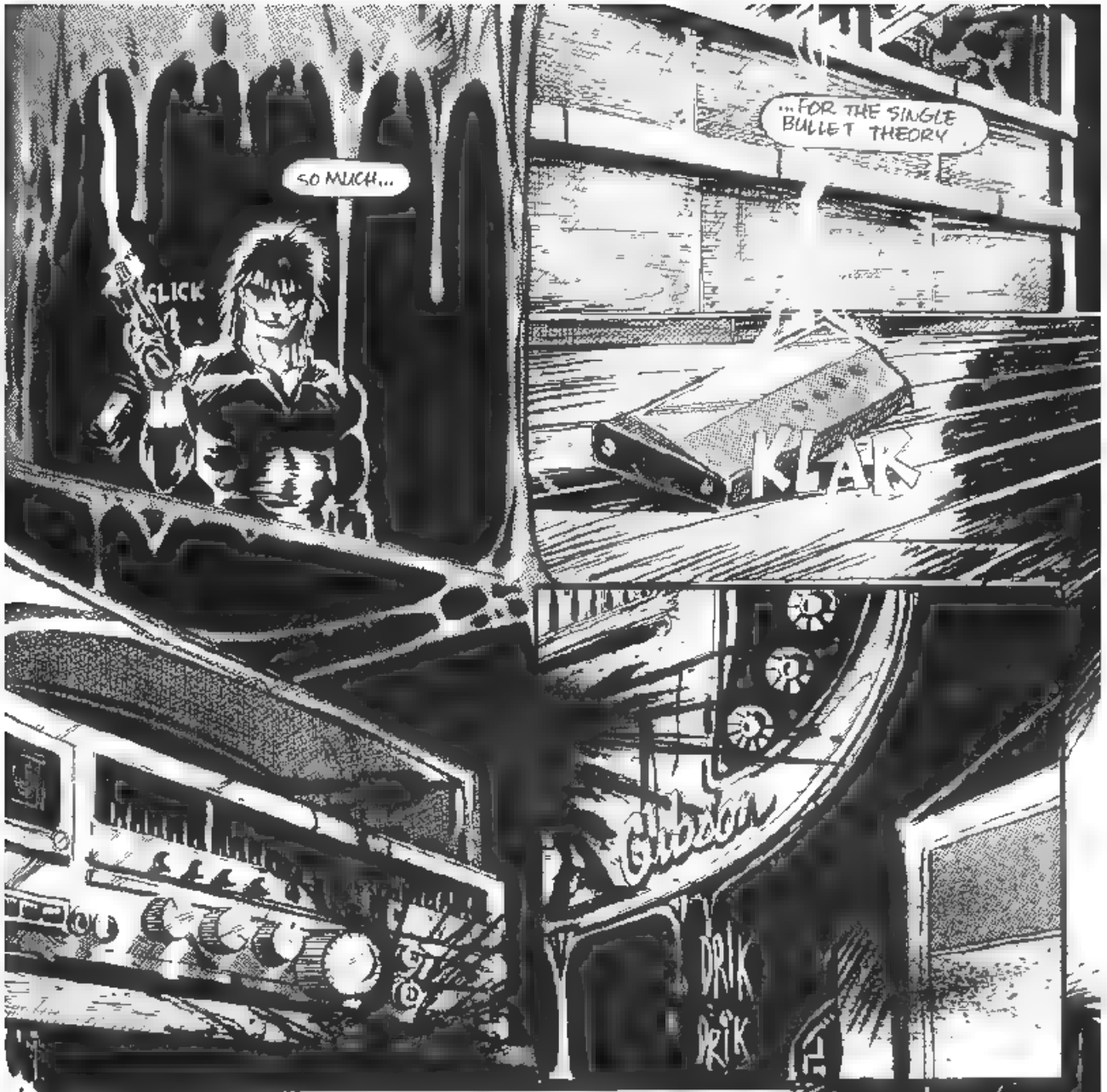


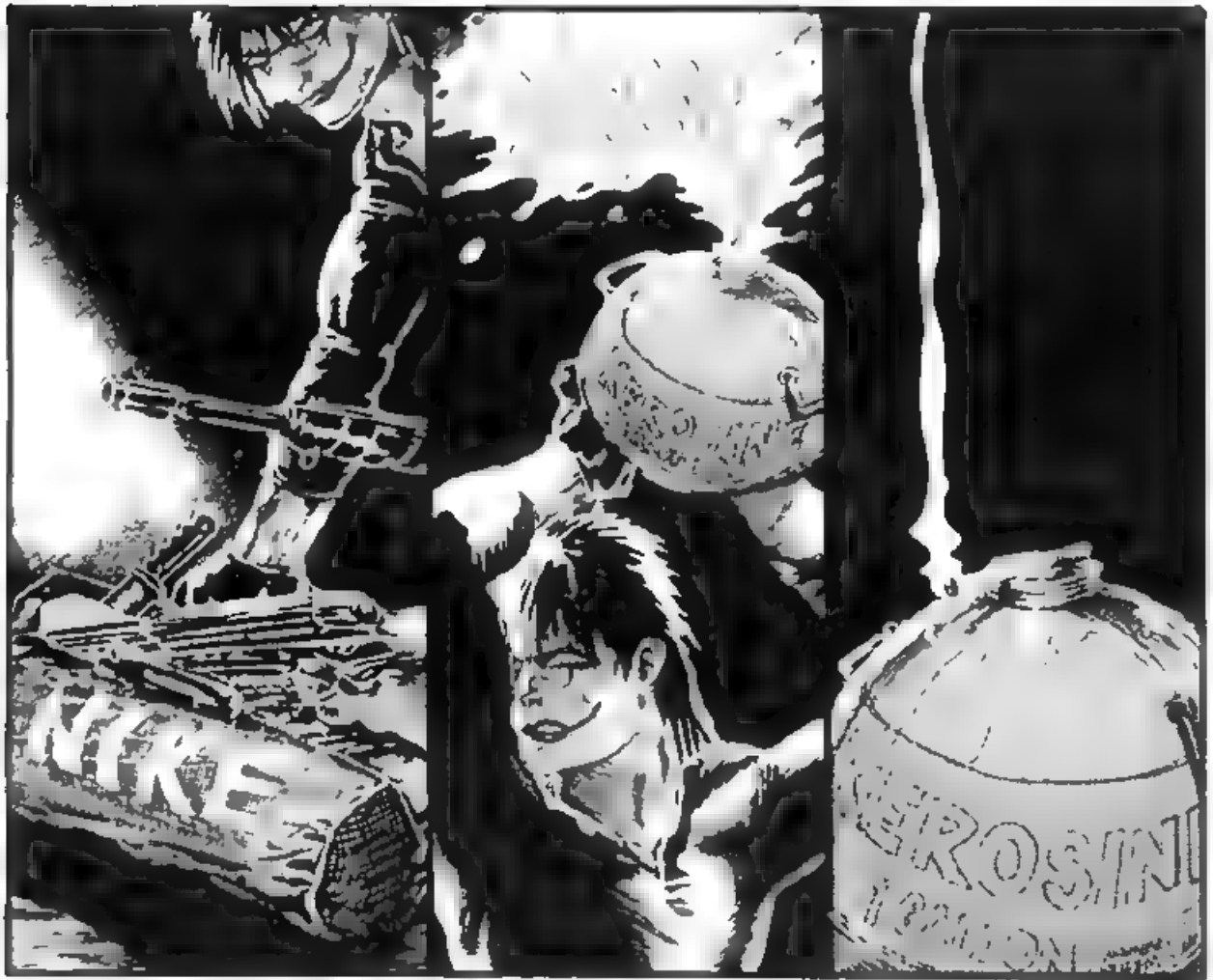












SUBMISSION







PLEASE...
PUT DOWN THE
WEAPONS.

OFFICER ALBRECT, I AM
GOING THROUGH THAT
DOORWAY..

I WILL NOT HURT
YOU BUT I AM
LEAVING.



SO, SHOOT F
YOU WILL...



GOOD GOD, MAN!
MY GUN COULD GO
OFF!!

OH, DAMN.





CAPT HOOK PLEASE, THIS IS ALBERT



"CAPTAIN, HOOK? I MEAN...
"SHAMMIT! YOU GUY KNOW I HATE THAT!"
"SORRY SIR, THIS IS ALBERT. I JUST TRANSFERED IN ABOUT THREE."
"I KNOW I KNOW, WHAT DO YOU WANT ALBERT?"
"ALBERT SIR, UMM, WELL, SOMETHING ER, SOMEONE CALLED THE CROW
SENDS HIS REGARDS SIR"
"THE CROW? BIG GUY, 6'5? SET BLACK HAIR? REAL CREEPY LOOKIN?"
"YES SIR, HE SAYS IT'LL BE OVER TOMORROW NIGHT..."
"CHRIST JESUS CHRIST!! WHERE ARE YOU? WHAT ARE THOSE SIRENS?!"
"UHM, GIDEON'S PAWN GUY, DEAL, THE CROW TORCHED THE PLACE... FIRE DEPT.
COT HERE JUST IN TIME TO SEE THE PLACE GLITTED"
"ARE YOU HAVE MR CROW IN CUSTODY, RIGHT ALBERT?"
"NO SIR... I LET HIM... HE LEFT."
"WHAT??! JESUS.. ALBERT GO ON HOME I'LL SEND THE LAB GUYS OVER"
"THANK YOU, SIR..."



INCOMING

MORE INCOMING

JUST SAY
WHY DO

SAY YES TO MICHIGAN!

THE HANGING GARDEN

Creatures kissing in the rain
Shapeless in the dark again
In the hanging garden
Please don't speak
In the hanging garden
No one sleeps

Catching haloes on the moon
Gives my hands the shapes of angels
In the heat of the night
The animals scream
In the heat of the night
Walking into a dream...

Fall fall fall fall
Into the walls
Jump jump out of time
Fall fall fall fall
Out of the sky
Cover my face as the animals cry

Creatures kissing in the rain
Shapeless in the dark again
In a hanging garden
Change the past
In a hanging garden
Wearing furs
And masks

Fall fall fall fall
Into the walls
Jump jump out of time
Fall fall fall fall
Out of the sky
Cover my face as the animals die
In the hanging garden

ROBERT SMITH
THE CURSE / PORNOGRAPHER



ELEGY

. IRONY & DESPAIR .



IRONY

THE TIDES OF SIN DRAW TIGHTER AND BRIGHTER,
THE HOURS BECOME HEAVIER AND WEIGHTED,
AND THE SHADOWS SMILE, DARK AND WILD,
THIS IS WHEN HOPE AND DESIRE COLLAPSE,
THE ARC OF THE DREAM DESCENDS INTO DESPAIR,
WHEN INNOCENT LOVERS DANCE
LIKE ANGELS ON FIRE
THIS IS WHEN THE NIGHT COMES DOWN,
A HAMMER ON AN ANVIL,
AND THE ONLY ABSOLUTION ACCEPTED
IS A LEGACY OF BRUTALITY,
A SINGLE NOTE RINGS ON AND ON AND ON.

DESPAIR

HERE DWELLS A SNAKE, ONE THOUSAND MILES LONG,
COILED, ONE THOUSAND MILES DEEP
EYES LIKE CANDY, IT HAS EYES LIKE CANDY
HARD AND BLUE, BUT SOFT AS KITTENS' FEET
OUT OF SIGHT OR IN THE ELEMENT OF LIGHT
IT COULD BE A DEVIL, IT COULD BE AN ANGEL,
WITH SPIDERS INSIDE A VISION FROM HELL
ITS SPINE IS A VERTICAL SCREAM
SLOW AS CONCRETE, BLURRED AS A DREAM
IT SPINS ROUND AND DOWN ON AN AXIS OF ATROCITY,
FUELED BY INERTIA, DEPTH, RADIUS, AND VELOCITY,
ITS SOUL - A TWISTED WRECKAGE OF DESPAIR AND PAIN
AND THE SPIDERS INSIDE ARE JUST PRAYING FOR RAIN
KILLING TIME KILLING TIME
AND PRAYING FOR RAIN
ONE THOUSAND MILES DEEP



A T M O S P H E R E







MISSED YOU.

"IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE" IS ON TONITE.



WE WATCHED THAT LAST NIGHT

BUT IT'S SO ROMANTIC!

YOU GOINNA CRY AGAIN?

PROBABLY, SO WHY DON'T YOU COME DOWN HERE AND MAKE ME SMILE FIRST.



DEAL



SO ERIC, WHAT'D YOU GET ME?



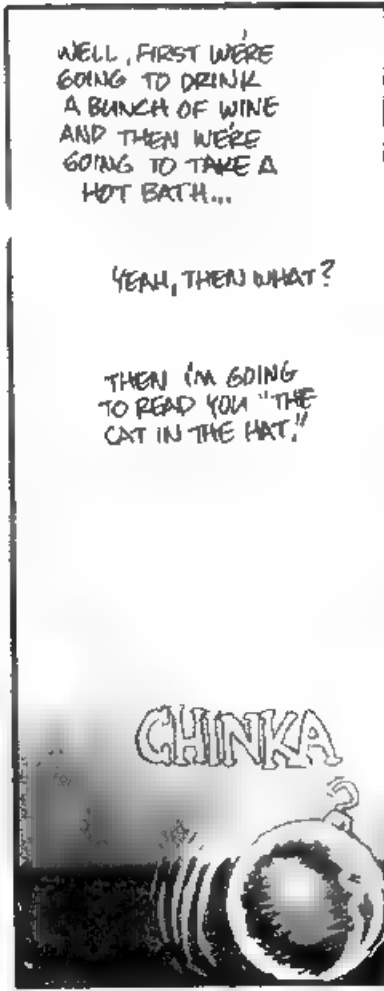


WHAT ABOUT ME?

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

YEAH, WHAT'RE
YOU GIVING ME?

KLINK



WELL, FIRST WE'RE
GOING TO DRINK
A BUNCH OF WINE
AND THEN WE'RE
GOING TO TAKE A
HOT BATH...

YEAH, THEN WHAT?

THEN I'M GOING
TO READ YOU "THE
CAT IN THE HAT."

CHINKA



VERY FUNNY

I DON'T THINK
YOU'VE SEEN MY
ADAPTION.

BUMP



SHELLY, I
LOVE YOU
SO MUCH.



GO AWAY CAT,
YOU MAKE ME
SMILE TOO MUCH.

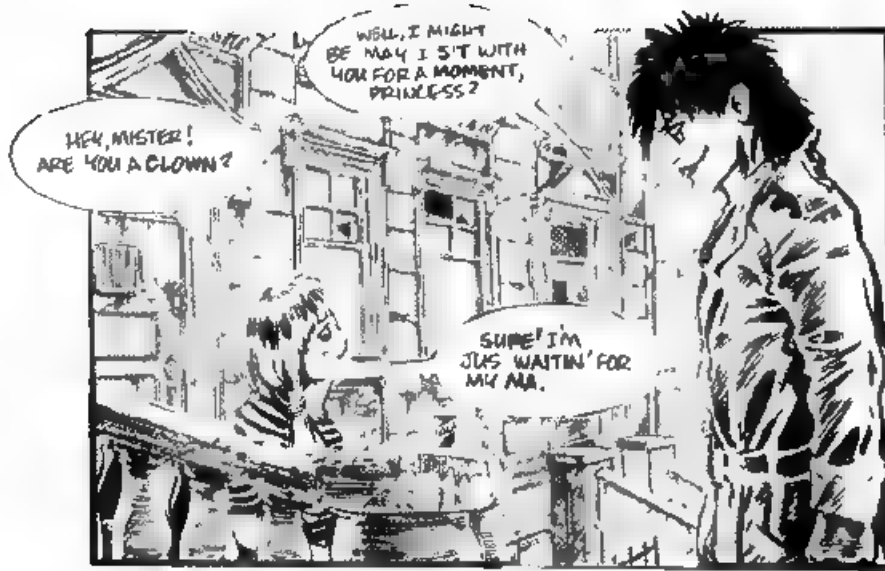


Où sont les neiges d'antan

Villon



VELOCITY







IT'S A RAYMOND CHANDLER EVENING
AT THE END OF SOMEONE'S DAY
AND I'M STANDING IN MY COAT
AND I'M SLOWLY TURNING GREY



I REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU
BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER WHY
AND THE YELLOW LEAVES ARE
FALLING
IN A SPIRAL FROM THE SKY



THERE'S A BODY ON THE RAILINGS
THAT I CAN'T IDENTIFY
AND I'D LIKE TO RE ASSURE YOU
BUT I'M NOT THAT KIND OF GUY

35

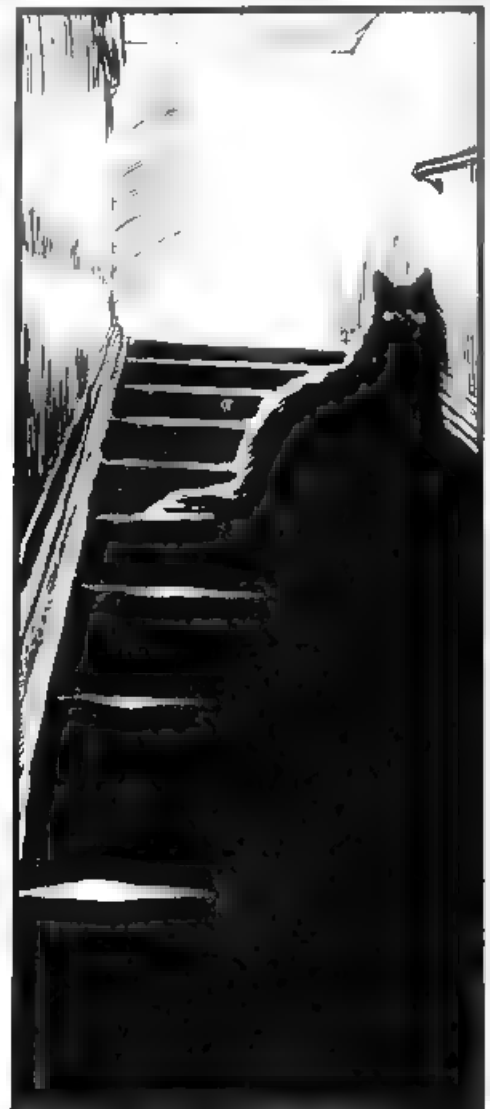


IT'S A RAYMOND CHANDLER EVENING
AND THE PAVEMENTS ARE ALL WET
AND I'M LURKING IN THE
SHADOWS
BECAUSE IT HASN'T HAPPENED...

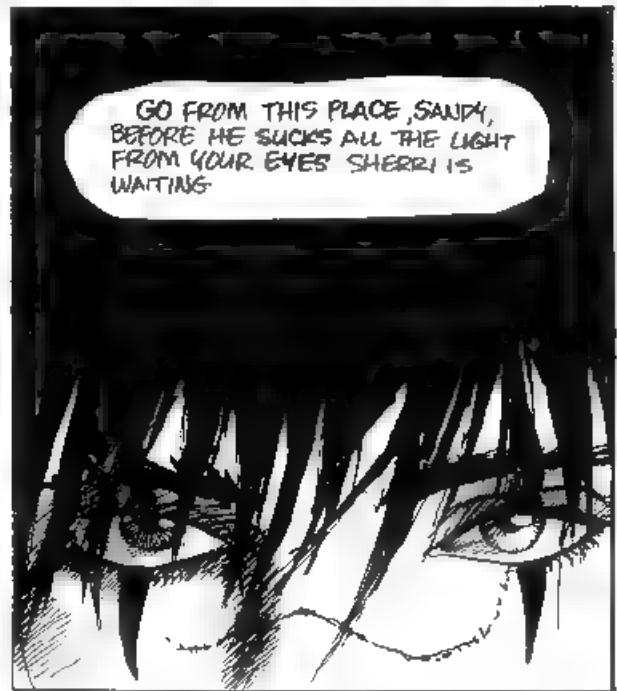


YET.

SMASH











AND THE REMNANT WERE SLAIN WITH THE SWORD OF HIM THAT SAT UPON THE HORSE WHICH SWORD PROCEEDED OUT OF HIS MOUTH:

AND ALL THE FOWLS WERE FILLED WITH THEIR FLESH.



SO YOU'RE THE CRAZY GHOST MAN THAT DONE IN TIN AN' TOP AN SANCHEZ, EH? HEARD 'TOM TOM AIN'T SAYIN' MUCH, NEITHER.

MAN I WAS THERE WHEN T-BIRD SHOT YOU DEAD SQUARE 'N THE BACK OF THE HEAD TWICE



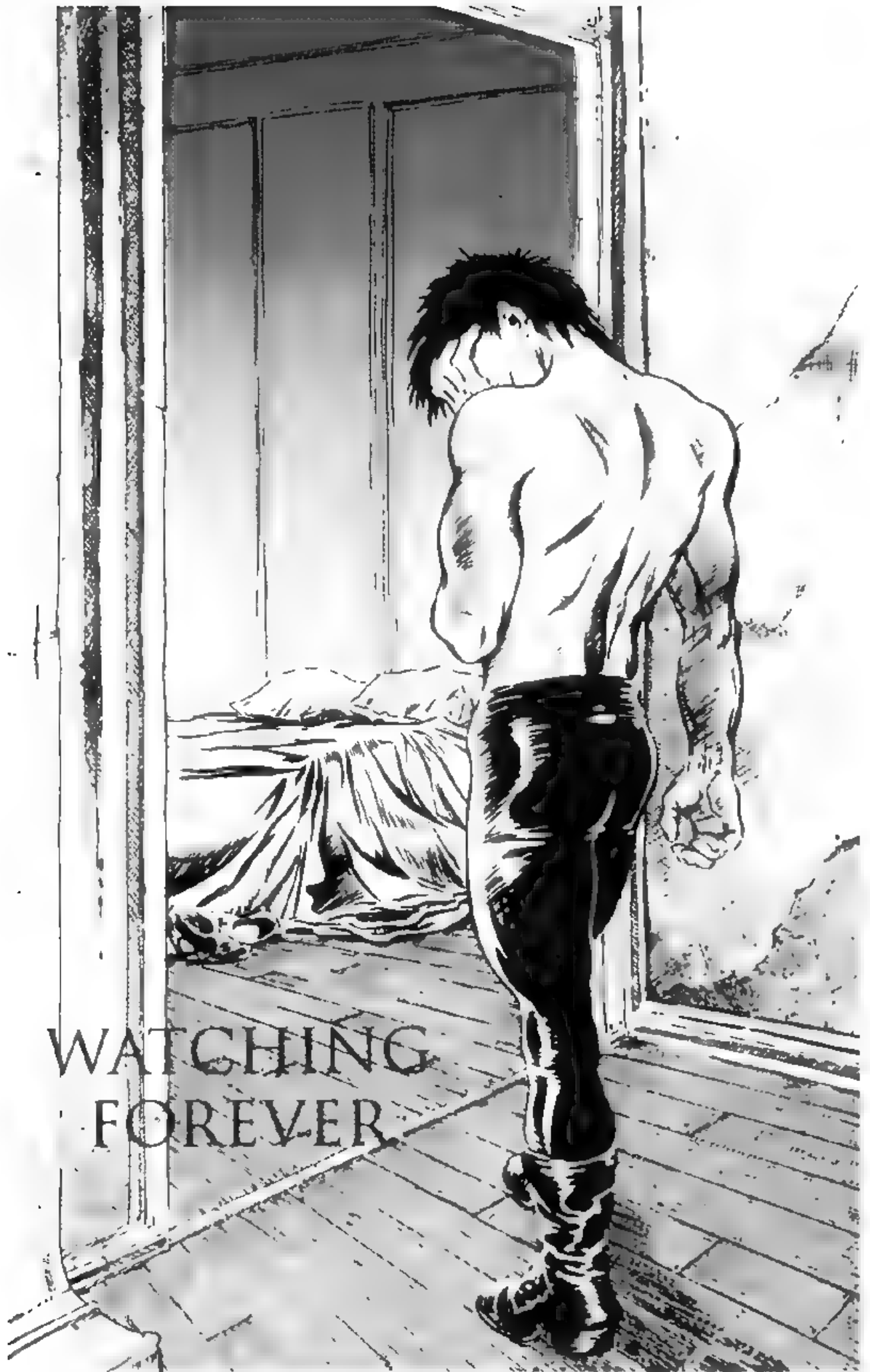
CHRIST, THE CUN WAS SO CLOSE YOUR HAIR STARTED ON FIRE..



ALL I SAW THE DEAD, SMALL AND GREAT, STAND BEFORE GOD

I SAW THE BLOOD OF CHRIST ON THEIR SKINS





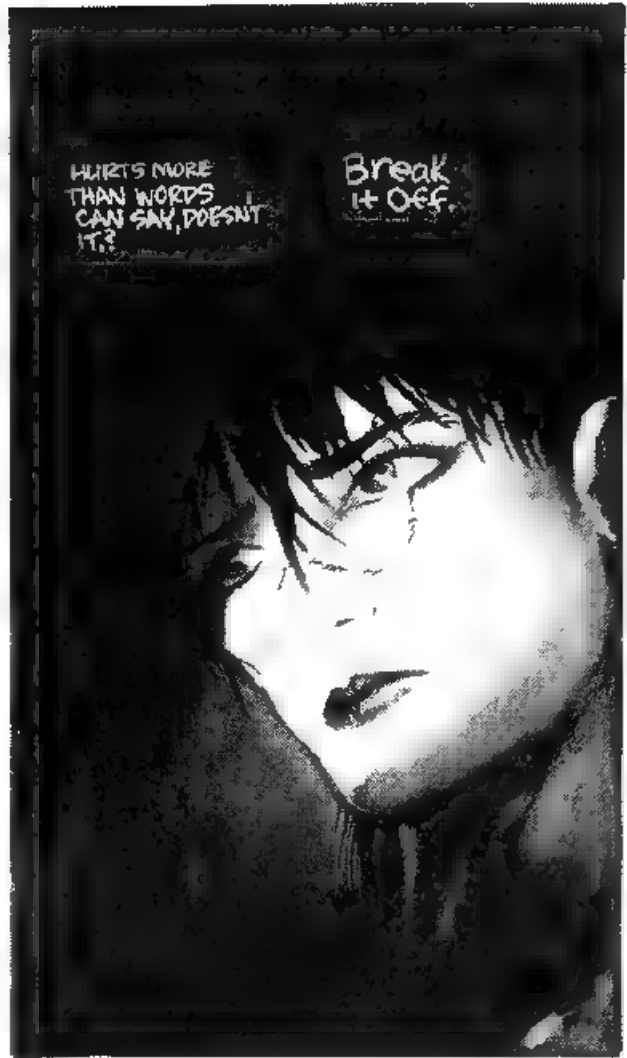
WATCHING
FOREVER





LOVE AND TRUST
AND INNOCENCE
AND RESPECT.

FOREVER AND EVER.

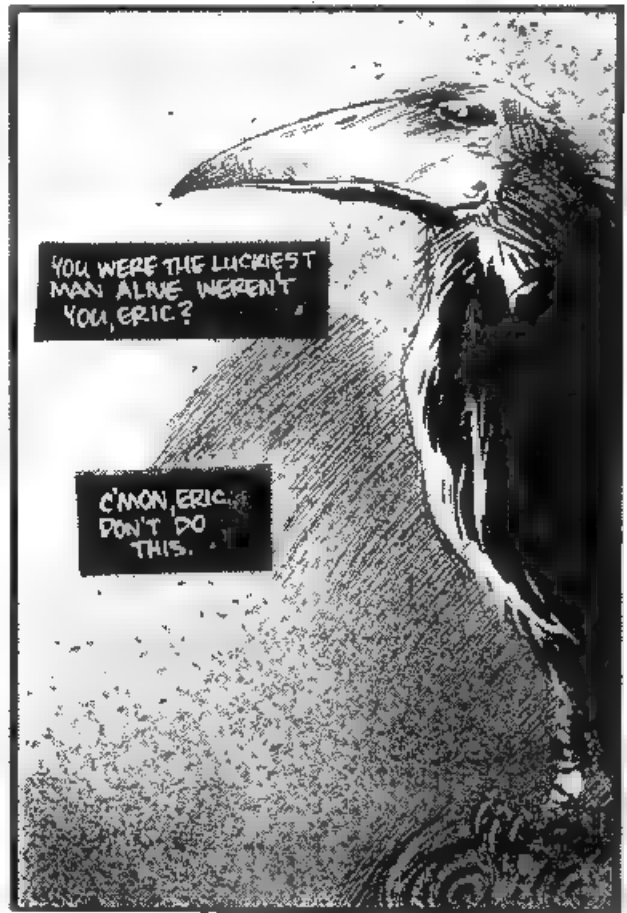


HURTS MORE
THAN WORDS
CAN SAY, DOESN'T
IT?

Break
it off.



SHE USED TO HUG
YOU SO HARD YOUR
RIBS HURT.



YOU WERE THE LUCKIEST
MAN ALIVE WEREN'T
YOU, ERIC?

C'MON, ERIC.
DON'T DO
THIS.



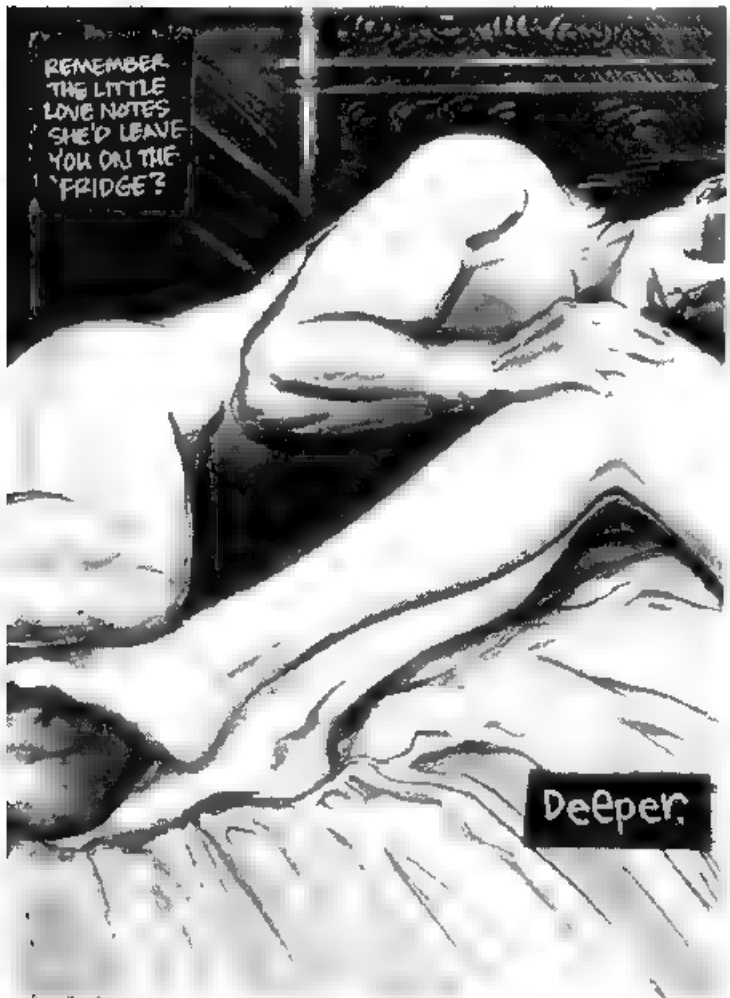
REMEMBER THE
SOFT MORNING SUN
PLAYING ACROSS
HER WHITE SKIN...

... SHINING OFF THAT
GOLDEN HAIR



CHRIST, WAS SHE
BEAUTIFUL... SO
SWEET AND KIND,
SHE WAS PERFECT...

BREATHTAKING



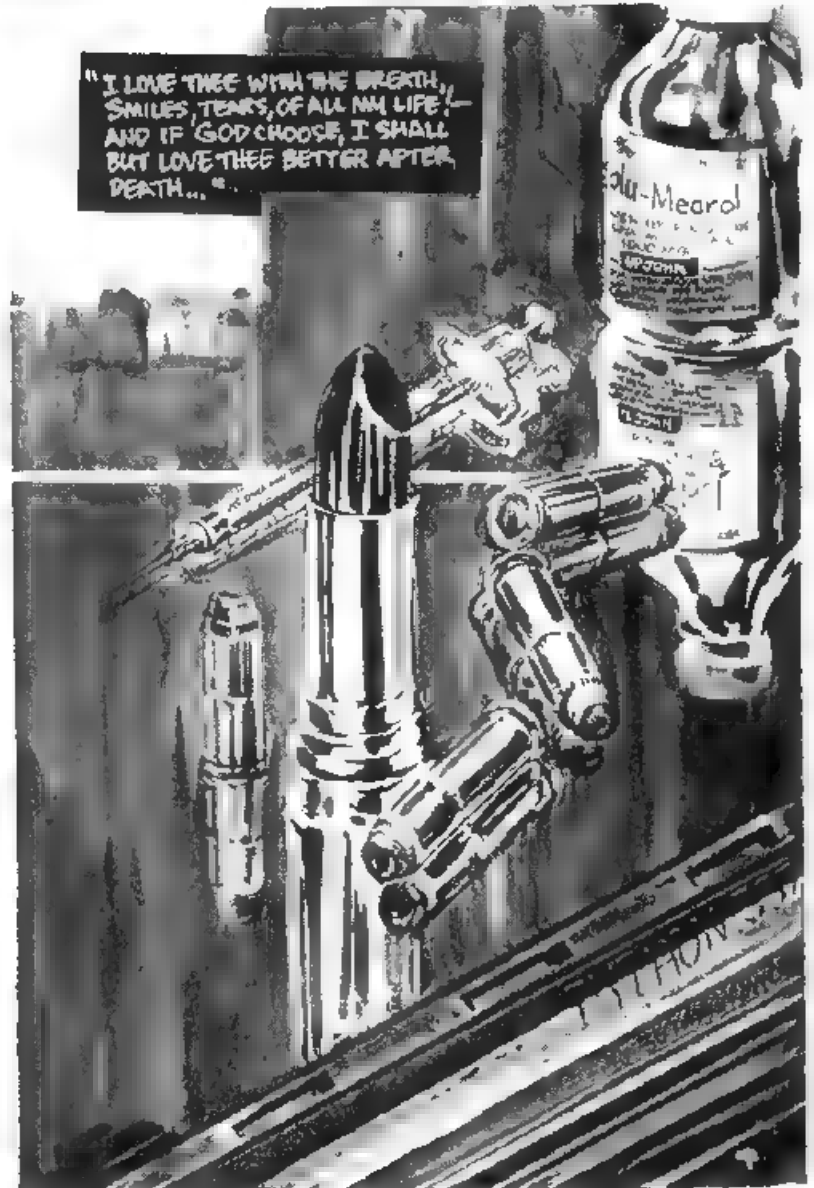
REMEMBER
THE LITTLE
LOVE NOTES
SHE'D LEAVE
YOU ON THE
FRIDGE?

Deeper

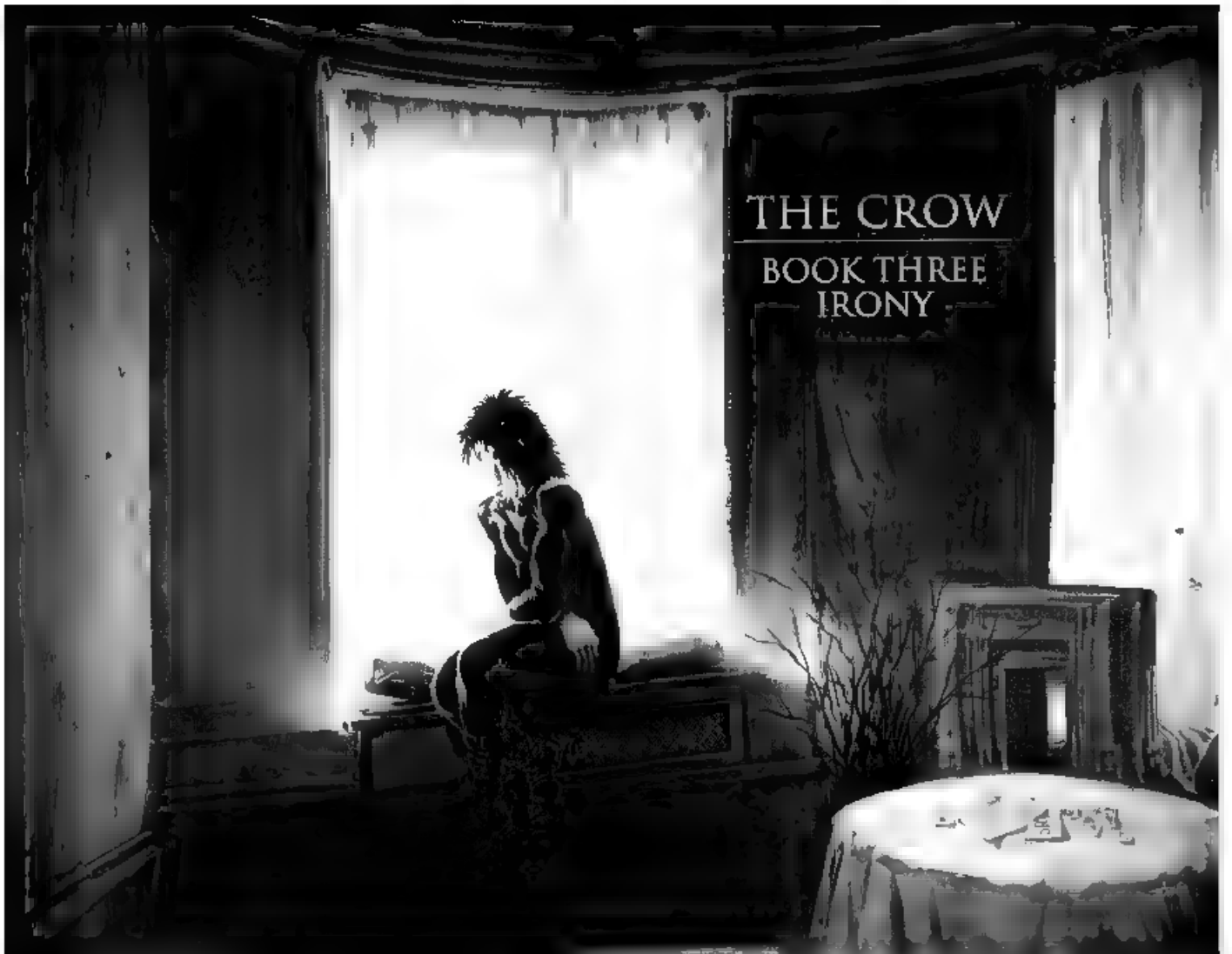


REMEMBER HOW
YOU USED TO
WAKE UP AT
NIGHT AND JUST
WATCH HER
SLEEP?

Twist
It.



THE CROW
BOOK THREE
IRONY







THERE IS ABSOLUTION AND REDEMPTION, SALVATION AND A MEANS TO AN END.



AND IF SOME OF THESE AXIOMS ARE OF OPPOSING POLARITIES THERE IS, AT LEAST, SOME CONSOLATION IN THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE A COMMON GROUND.





MINE?



FOREVER.

ONLY FOREVER?

FOREVER...



.. AND EVER.

IMMOLATION











READY FOR YUP SUNDAY SCH? LESSON IS...


...BENE... A...

...CHURCH OF...


...YOU SEE... THE... SUN... FINALLY?

...READY TO... TAKE...


...HOW... THE... ROAD... ON... A...




SEVEN BLACKBIRDS
IN A TREE, COUNT
THM AND SEE
WHAT THEY BE.



ONE FOR SORROW
TWO FOR JOY




THREE FOR A GIRL
FOUR FOR A BOY



FIVE FOR SILVER
SIX FOR GOLD

SEVEN FOR A
SECRET THAT'S
NEVER BEEN
TOLD.

YOU'RE ALL
GOING TO DIE



OH, BARKEEP,
WOULD YOU HOLD
ONTO THIS FOR ME
TILL I ASK FOR IT?

WHY, THANK
YOU, SIR.

I'LL PUT A
STOP TA THIS
RIGHT QUICK
FUN BOY..

TAKE
HIM OUT!!



THE CARriage HELD NOT
JUST OURSELVES -
AND IMMORTALITY

THE CARriage HELD NOT
JUST OURSELVES -
AND IMMORTALITY

... NOW,
LOTS DO IT







SO!! THE GHOST DOES BLEED, AFTER ALL!



DEATH, LIKE VIRTUE, HAS ITS DEGREES.

MARTYRDOM IS NOW THE PRICE OF SALVATION!



AND HE WAS CLOTHED IN A GESTURE DIPPED IN BLOOD.



IT APPEARS, FUN BOY THAT THE PARTY HAS ENDED...

NOT WEARIN' A VEST
ARE YA, CASPER?
...DON'T MATTER NO
WAYS.

I DONF WHAT
I DONE AN I AINT
SORRY

MAN, I DONE WORSE!
KILT THIS WHOLE FAM LY
UP IN BLOOMFIELD HILLS WHEN
PADDY PIMPED ME ON A
KEE

TELL YA THIS
PAL: SHE WAS
REAL HOT YOUR
GIRL

EVEN WITH
HALF HER HEAD
BLOWD OFF.

DIDNT BOTHER
ME NONE EITHER
DUN' HER LIKE
THAT

WHO EVER FIGHTS MONSTERS
SHOULD SEE TO IT THAT IN THE
PROCESS HE DOES NOT BECOME A
MONSTER. FUN BOY SO FINE
T-BIRD! I'M FACED TO BE DONE
WITH THIS.



GOOD NIGHT

The rabbits play no more
The little birds are weary,
The buttercups are folded up —
Good night, good night, my dearie

The children in the country
The children in the city
Go to their beds with nodding heads —
Good night, good night, my pretty

— Rose Fyleman



SO, FUNBOY, GO AND
FETCH T-BIRD. YOU KNOW
WHERE TO MEET ME ?

THE FIVE,
BY THE LUNA TORCH?



YES, T-BIRD
IS AN F
VIA F.F.M.V.B.K.

SO, DON'T
MAKE ME COME
AFTER YOU,
F.F.B.V.



I WILL HURT
YOU

A LOT,
AND SLOWLY.



AIN'T GOT NO-
WHERE TO RUN
LEAST NOT FROM
YOU, ANYWAYS

YOU GONNA
KILL ME THERE,
AIN'T YA ?

FUNBOY, YOU
WERE DEAD THE
MOMENT YOU TOUCH-
ED THAT GIRL.

PROMISE ME
YOU'LL MAKE IT
QUICK AN' CLEAN

YES, FOR YOU
I PROMISE,
NOT T-BIRD.





GOD, YOU BASTARD.

HOW COULD YOU DO THAT TO HER?



HOW COULD YOU MAKE SOMETHING SO SOFT AND INNOCENT AND BEAUTIFUL AND THEN DESTROY IT?

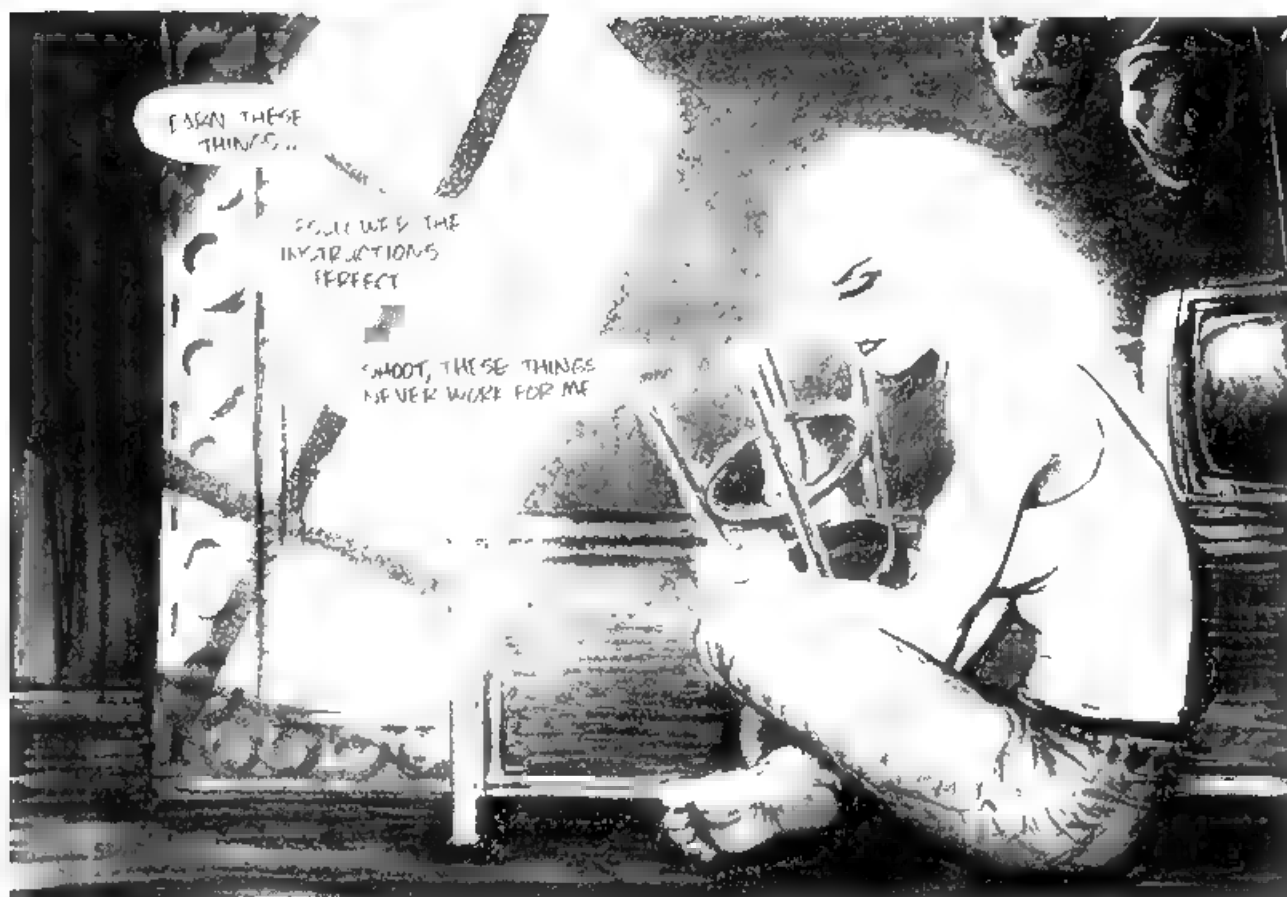
HOW COULD YOU DO THAT?

CLINK



HOW COULD YOU MAKE HER SUFFER LIKE THAT?

YOU BASTARD.





ERIC CAN FIX IT. HE'S SO GOOD AT THIS STUFF.



ERIC! I DIDN'T HEAR...



SSHHH.



ERIC WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU O.K.?



NOTHING'S
WRONG. I
JUST WANT
TO LOOK AT
YOU

ARE YOU SURE
YOU'RE O.K.?

GOD, YOU'RE SO
BEAUTIFUL

ERIC!

HELLY, I LOVE YOU
SO MUCH THAT IT
HURTS MY HEART
WHEN I'M AWAY

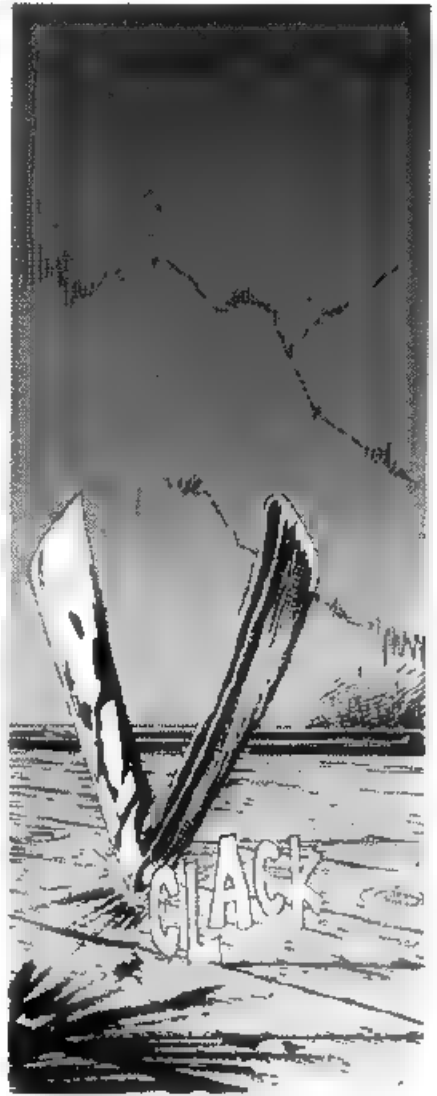
ERIC, I THINK ABOUT
YOU EVERY MINUTE
OF THE DAY, TOO.



I LOVE YOU SO MUCH
IT SCARES ME.



WERE SOMETHING, HUH?
YES



"THE CAT IN THE HAT!!"
"THE CAT IN THE HAT!!"





GO AHEAD, MISSY - KEEP SPLASHING...
I'VE GOT THIS BIG OL' CUP AND SOME
ICE COLD TAP WATER...

YOU WOULDN'T DARE.

MIGHTY SURE OF YOURSELF
AIN'T YOU?

I'M A WOMAN.

SO, WHERE ARE WE GOING
TO CELEBRATE OUR EN-
GAGEMENT?

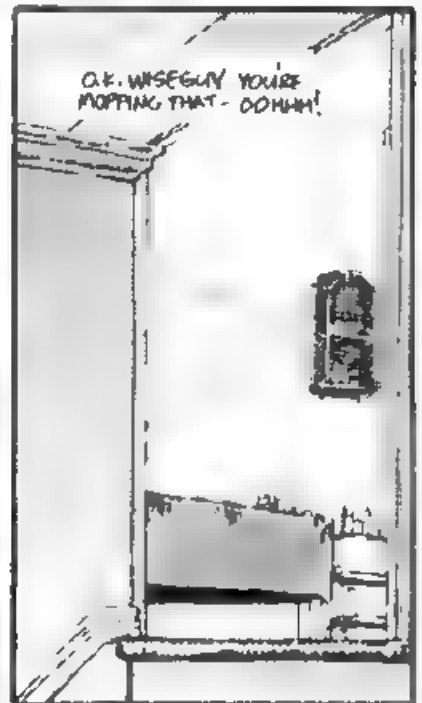
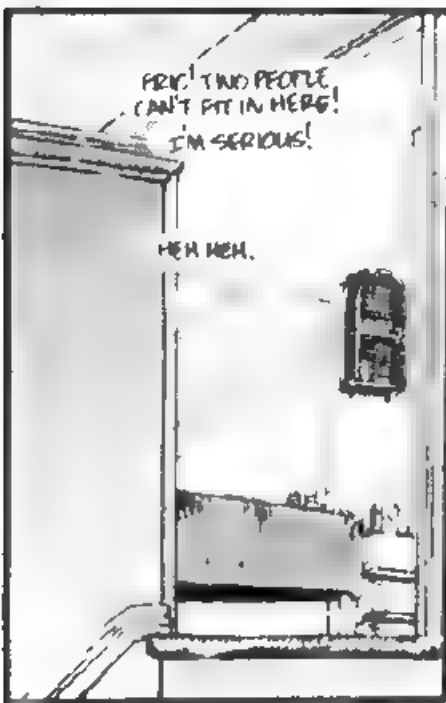


I THOUGHT WED GO
DANCING, HAVE A PICNIC
ON THE BEACH, WATCH
THE SUN GO DOWN,
POOL AROUND

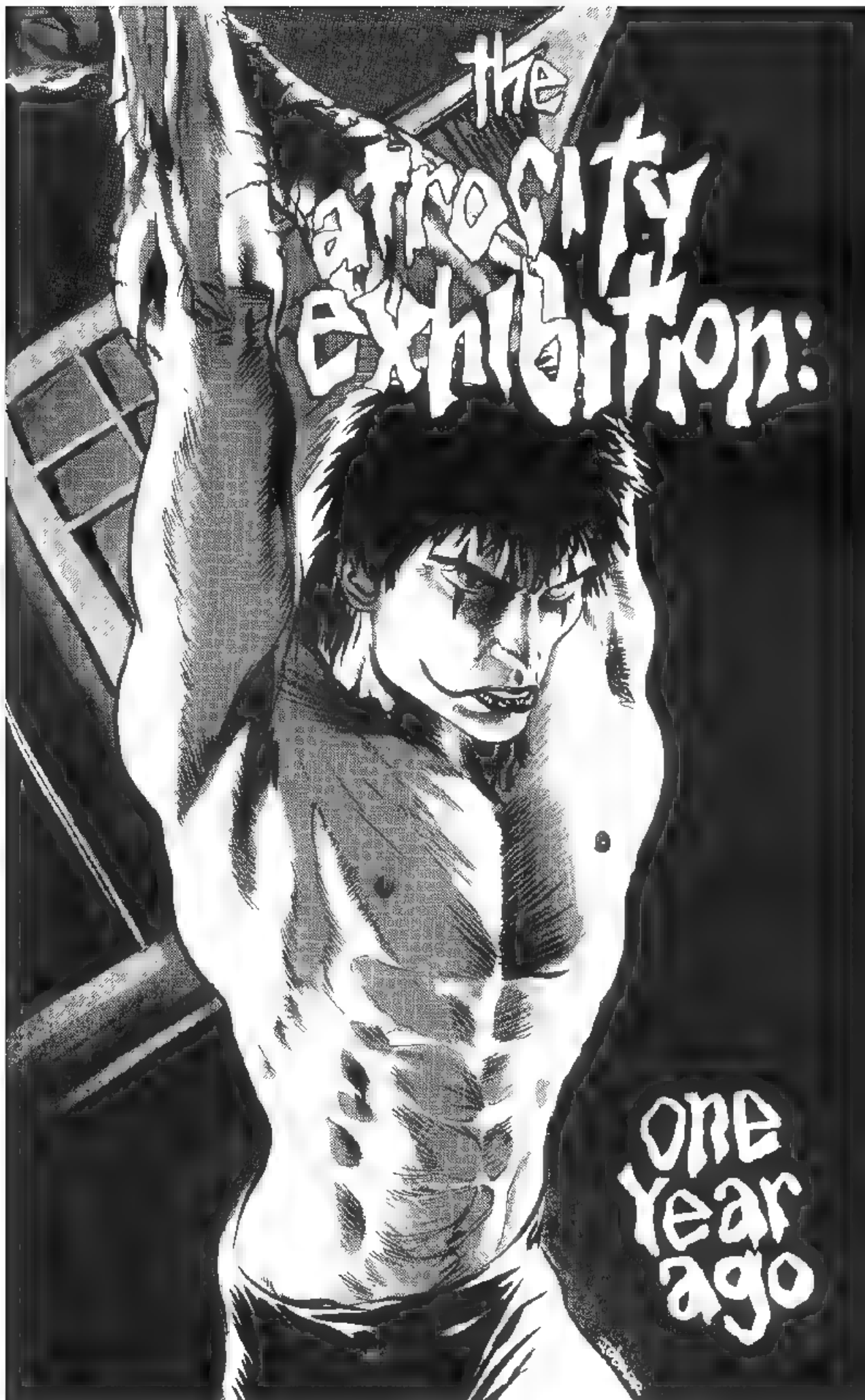


NO WAY!!

I DON'T FEEL
LIKE DANCING



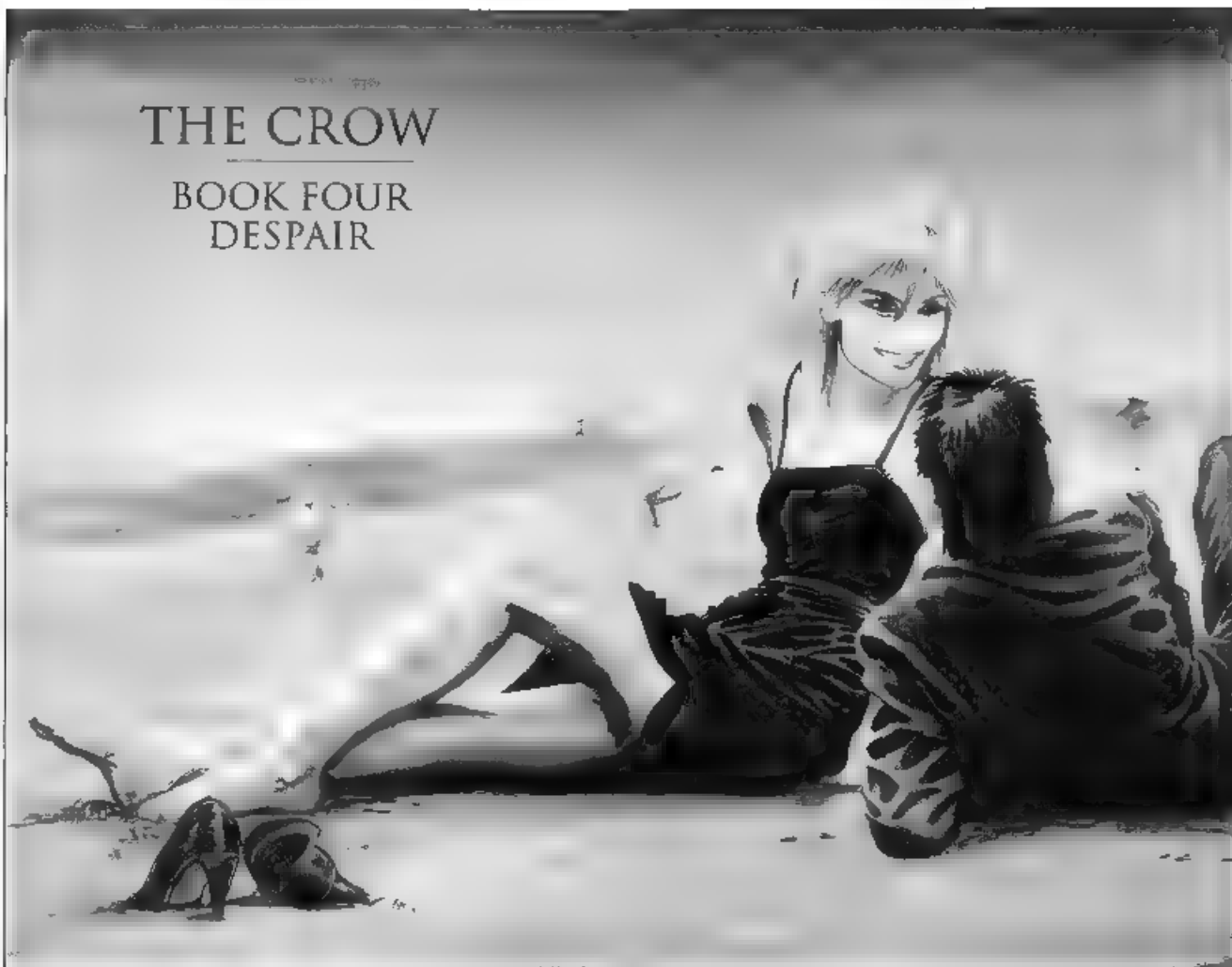
The Proximity Exhibition:



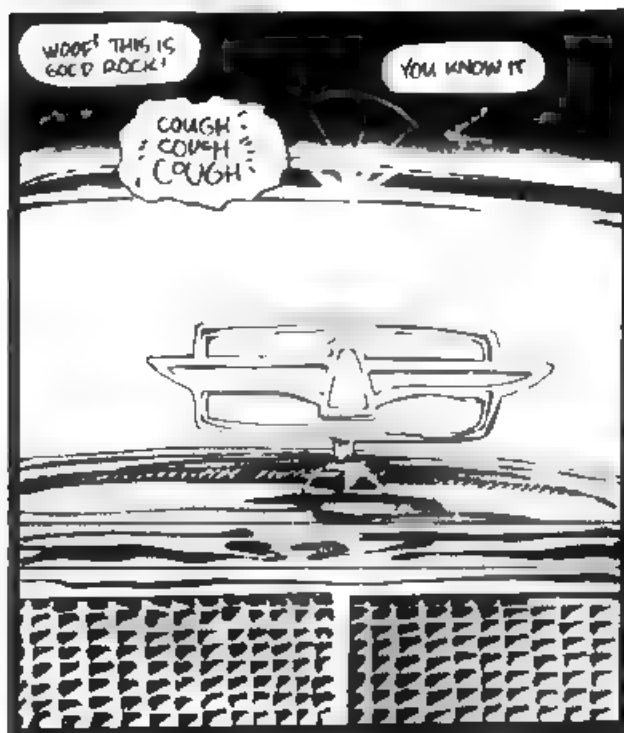
one
year
ago

THE CROW

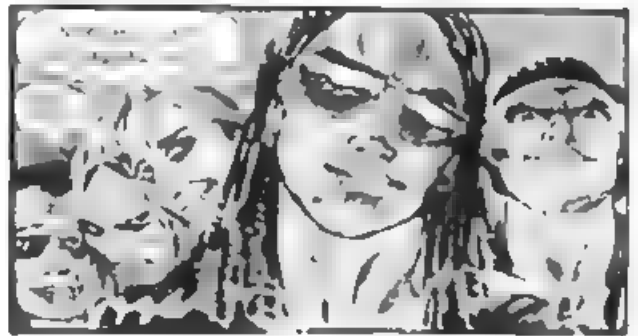
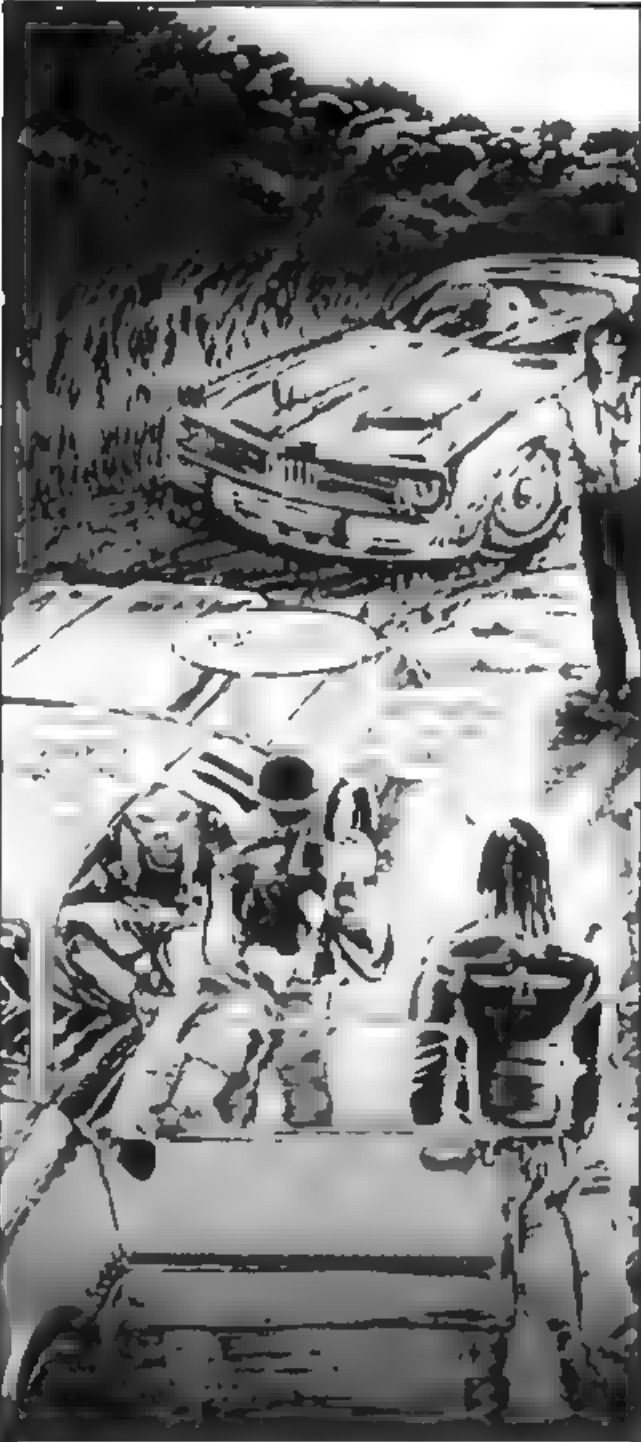
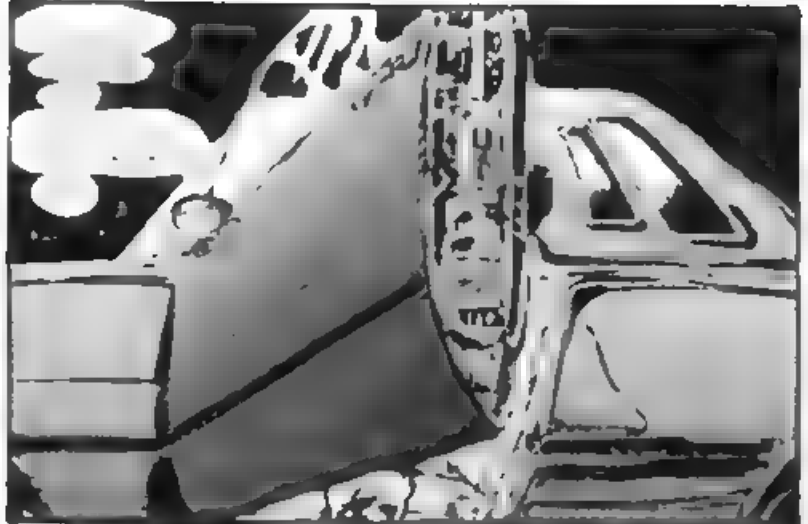
BOOK FOUR
DESPAIR

















ANY PARTING WORDS
FOR YOUR PRETTY
LITTLE BOYFRIEND,
MONEY?

NO, I HATE SO CAL
AN' DO HIM.







LOOK T, HIS HAIR'S ON FIRE.



IT AINT YOUR FAULT. BOY



NOT



HEY TBRD QUIT
W.S. & W.T.
THE DEAD GUY
LETS DO THE
BLIND



GET HER OUTTA
SUNSHINE

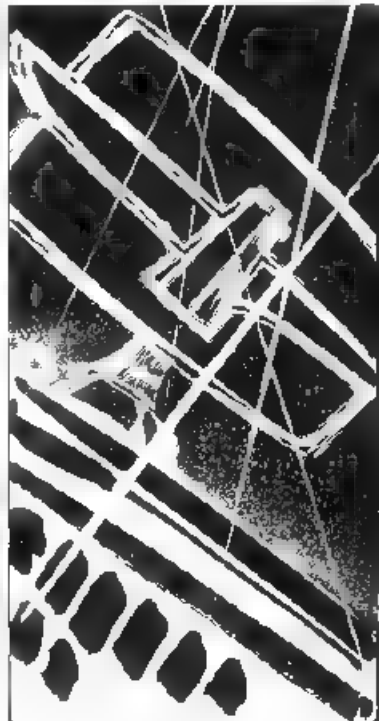
FLIK

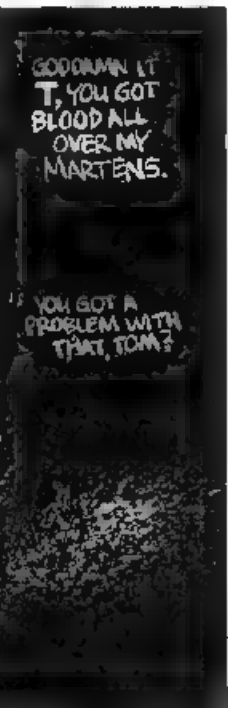


SPUNKSSSS



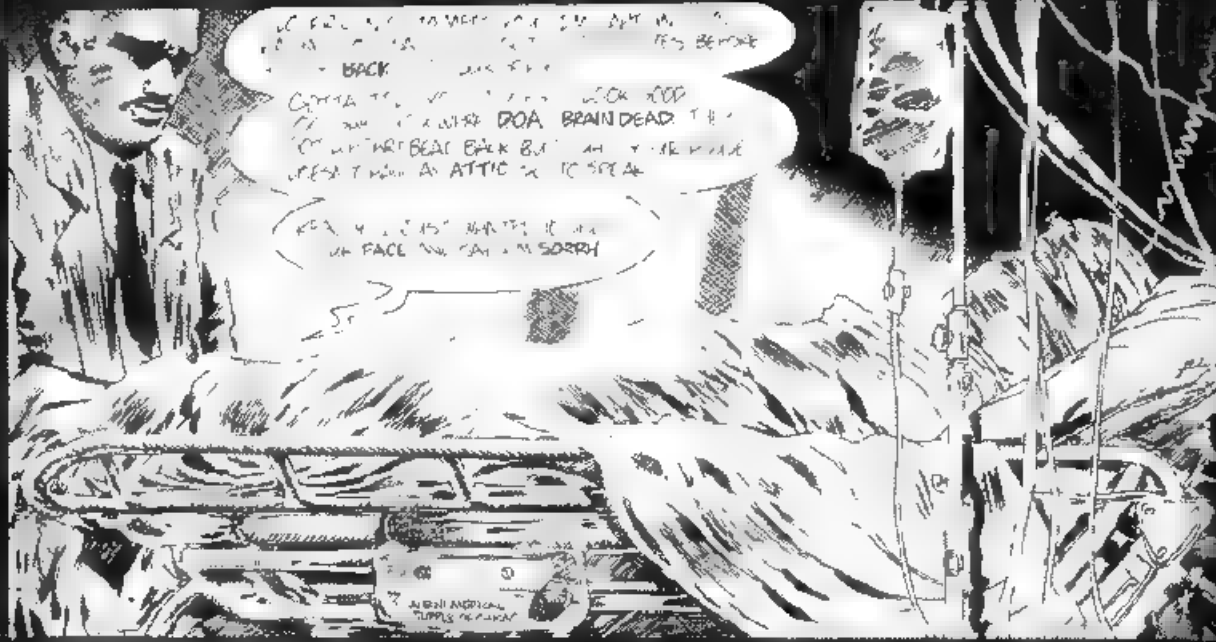








head trauma



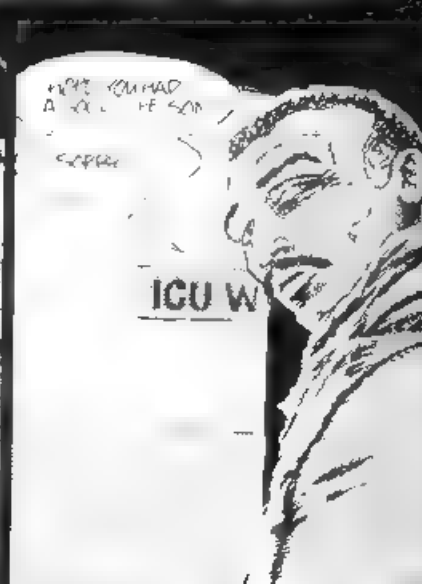
... BACK ...
... DOA BRAIN DEAD ...
... BEAT BACK ...
... ATTIC ...
... FACE ... SORRY



... SEE ...
... WHY ...
... HAPPEN ...
... SCK ...



... CASE ...
... BE ...



... YOU ...
... HE ...
... ICU W ...



... CROW ...



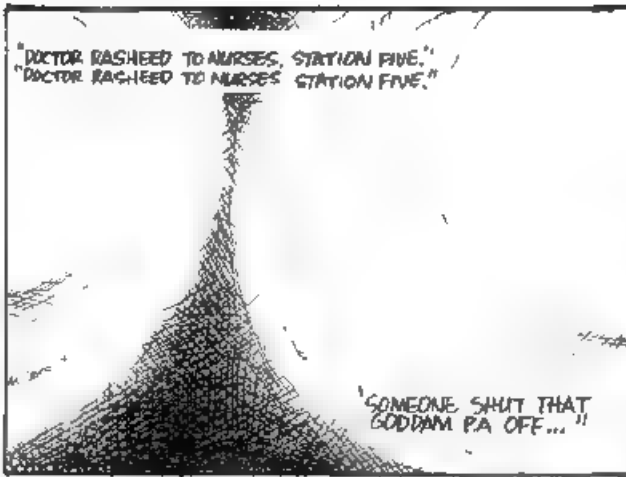
WHAT?!? WHAT DID YOU SAY?!?



THE CROW...



THE CROW SAID DON'T LOOK!!

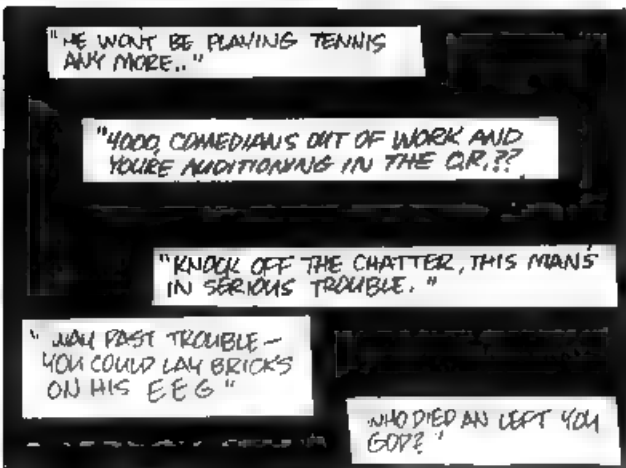


"DOCTOR RASHEED TO NURSES, STATION FIVE."
"DOCTOR RASHEED TO NURSES STATION FIVE."

"SOMEONE SHUT THAT
GODDAM PA OFF..."



"NURSE, EXPLORER.. NO THE 3/10. THANK YOU."
"OH JESUS. LOOK AT THIS..."



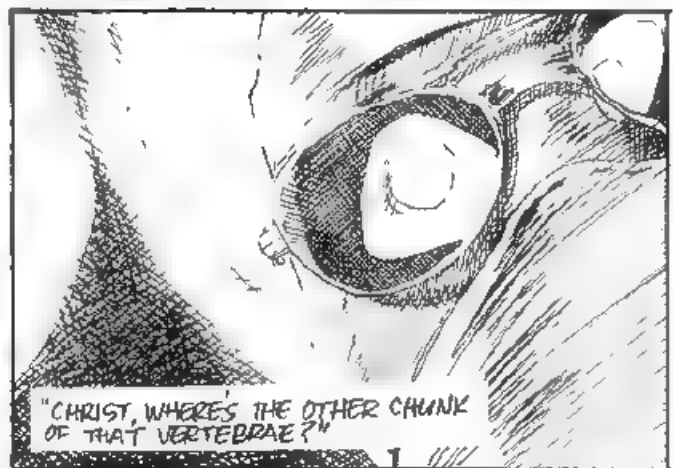
"HE WON'T BE PLAYING TENNIS
ANY MORE.."

"4000 COMEDIANS OUT OF WORK AND
YOU'RE MORTIFYING IN THE OR,??"

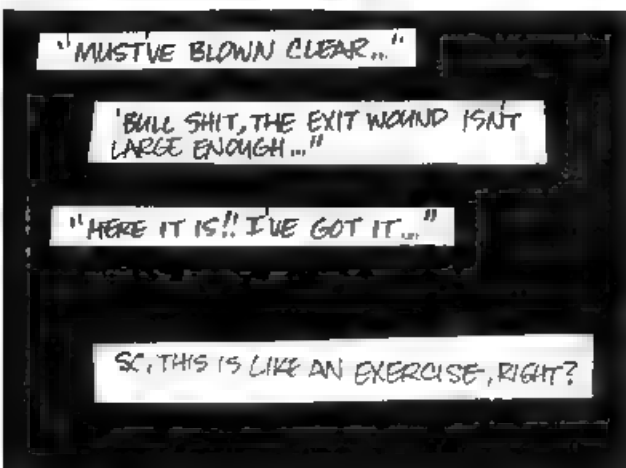
"KNOCK OFF THE CHATTER, THIS MAN'S
IN SERIOUS TROUBLE."

"JUNK PAST TROUBLE -
YOU COULD LAY BRICKS
ON HIS EGG"

"WHO DIED AN LEFT YOU
GOD? "



"CHRIST, WHERE'S THE OTHER CHUNK
OF THAT VERTEBRAE? "



"MUST'VE BLOWN CLEAR.."

"BULL SHIT, THE EXIT WOUND ISN'T
LARGE ENOUGH..."

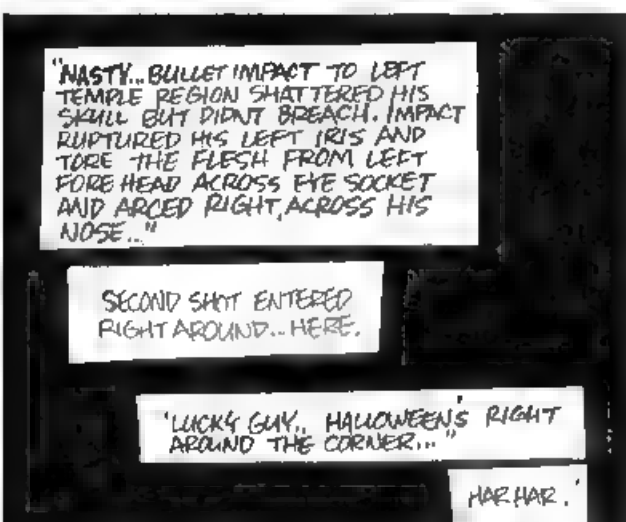
"HERE IT IS!! I'VE GOT IT.."

"SO, THIS IS LIKE AN EXERCISE, RIGHT?"



"OK NURSE, IT'S CLEAN, LET'S SEE
WHAT WE CAN DO WITH THE THIRD
AND FOURTH VERTEBRAE."

"WHAT'S HIS FLIP SIDE LOOK LIKE? "

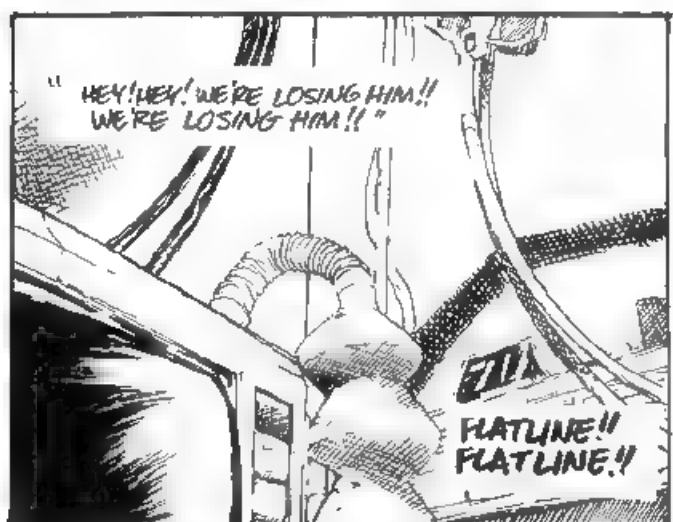


"NASTY... BULLET IMPACT TO LEFT
TEMPLE REGION SHATTERED HIS
SKULL BUT DIDN'T BREACH. IMPACT
RUPTURED HIS LEFT IRIS AND
TORE THE FLESH FROM LEFT
FORE HEAD ACROSS EYE SOCKET
AND ARCED RIGHT, ACROSS HIS
NOSE.."

"SECOND SHOT ENTERED
RIGHT AROUND... HERE."

"LUCKY GUY.. HALLOWEEN'S RIGHT
AROUND THE CORNER.."

"HAR HAR."



"HEY! HEY! WE'RE LOSING HIM!!
WE'RE LOSING HIM!!"

"FLATLINE!!
FLATLINE!!"



ERIC...HEY ERIC...



IT'S ME...



HEARTBEAT?!
HEARTBEAT?!

WHAT THE HELL ARE
YOU DOING? WHAT
KIND OF STUNT IS
THIS?

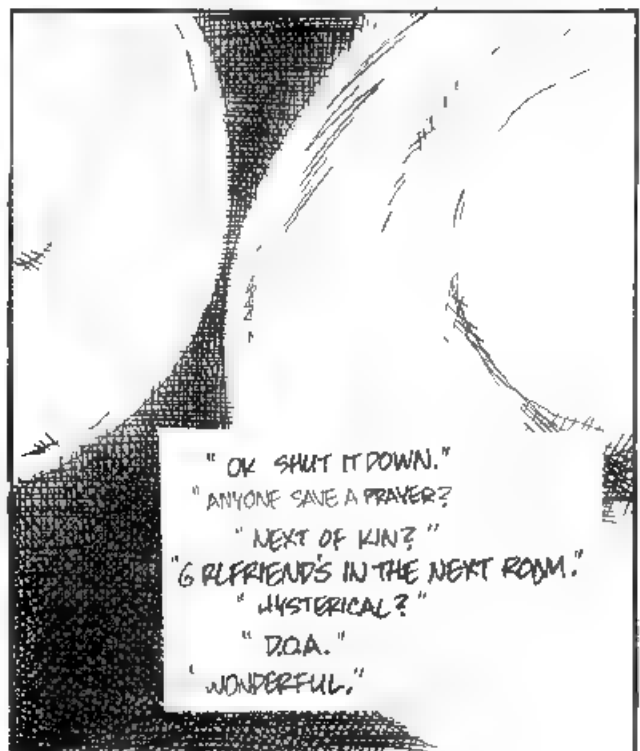


LET'S GET
OUTTA HERE.

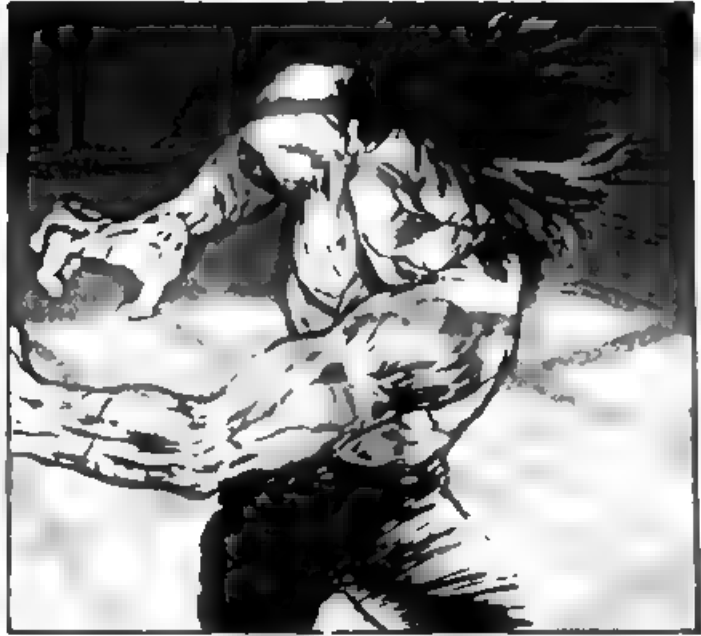
YOU HAVE
RESPONSIBILITIES,
JUNIOR.



"BRING ME THE HEAD OF DAVID,"
SHE SAID.



"OK SHUT IT DOWN."
"ANYONE SAVE A PRAYER?"
"NEXT OF KIN?"
"6 RELFRIEND'S IN THE NEXT ROOM."
"HYSTERICAL?"
"D.O.A."
"WONDERFUL."



SHELLY, I'M COMING HOME.



MY VALENTINE
HAS HOLLOW EYES

CRESCENDO

. DEATH .



DEATH

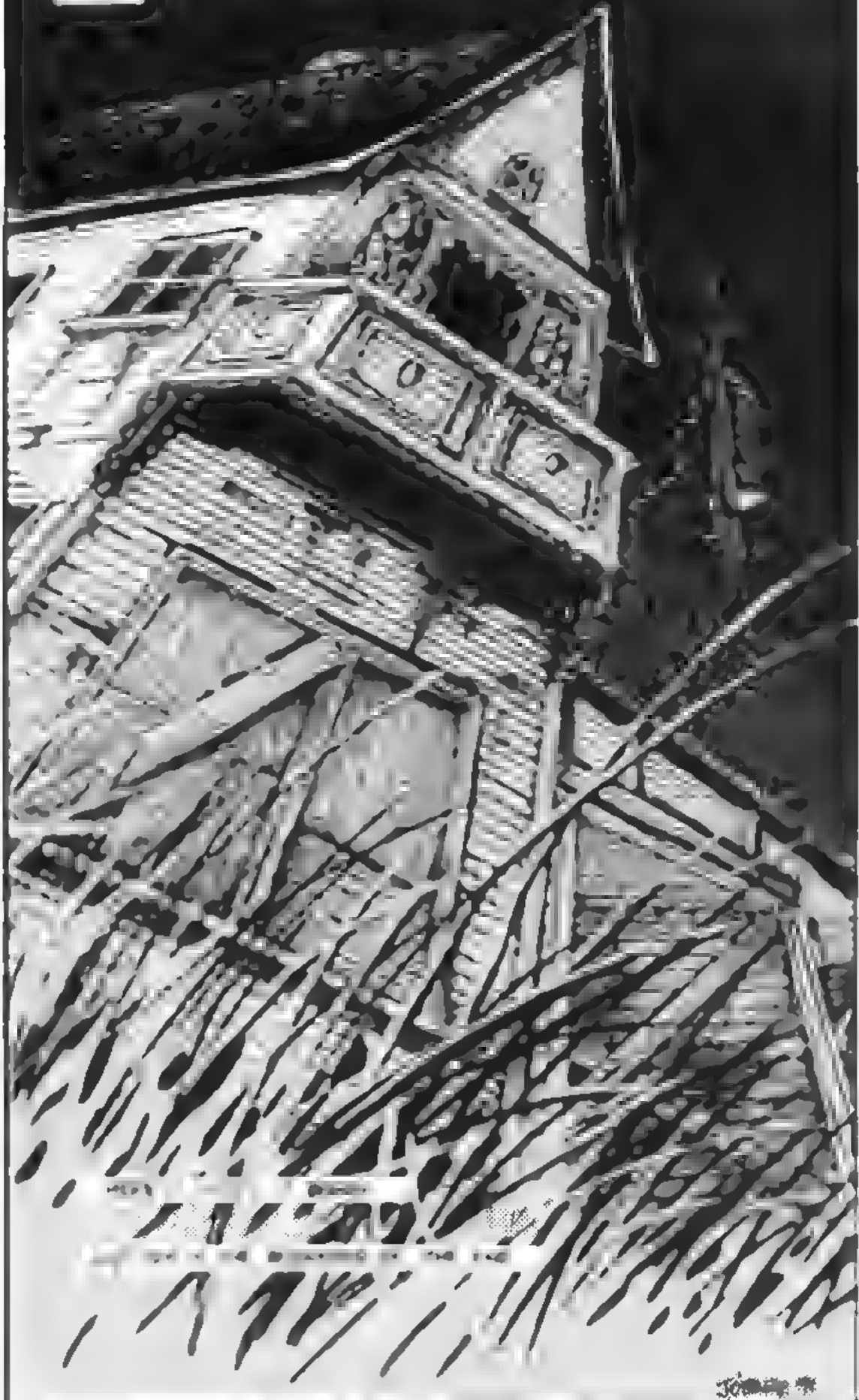
IT'S NOT DEATH IF YOU REFUSE IT,
IT IS IF YOU ACCEPT IT.

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HERE.

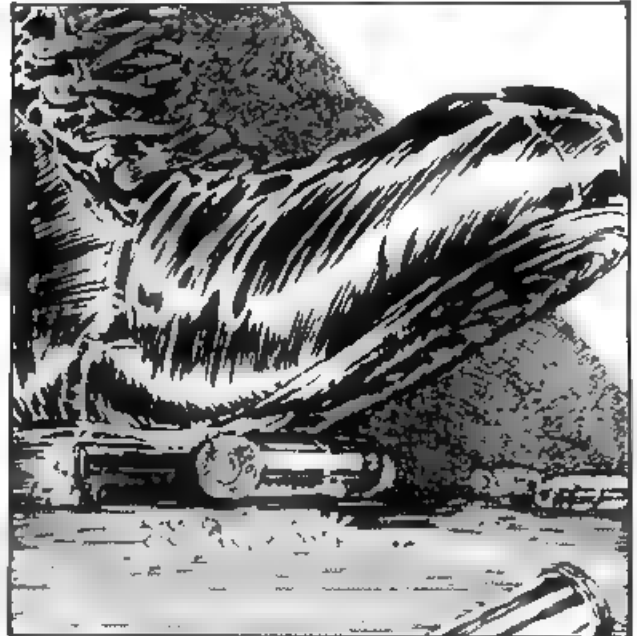


JOHN

ANGEL,
ALL
FIRE







IN THE DOORWAY OF GLORY HE
FINDS DEATH WHO PUTS HIS HAND
IN HIS AND WHISPERS TO HIM
"NOW. . . COME HOME, NOW."

"SOON," HE SAYS.



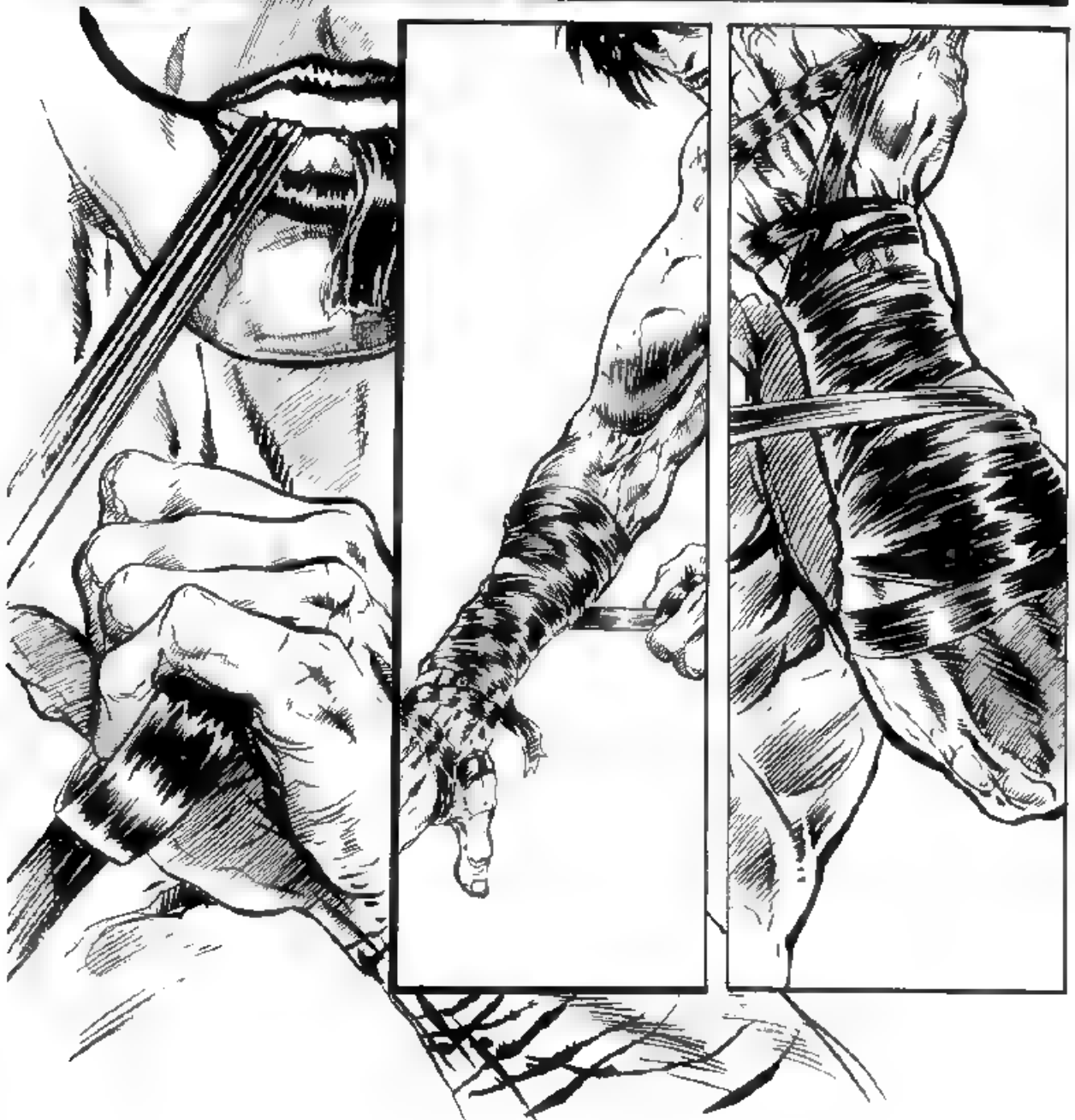
ERIC I FEEL SO SAFE
WHEN I'M WITH YOU

I'D NEVER LET ANYTHING
HAPPEN TO YOU SHELLY

I PROMISE

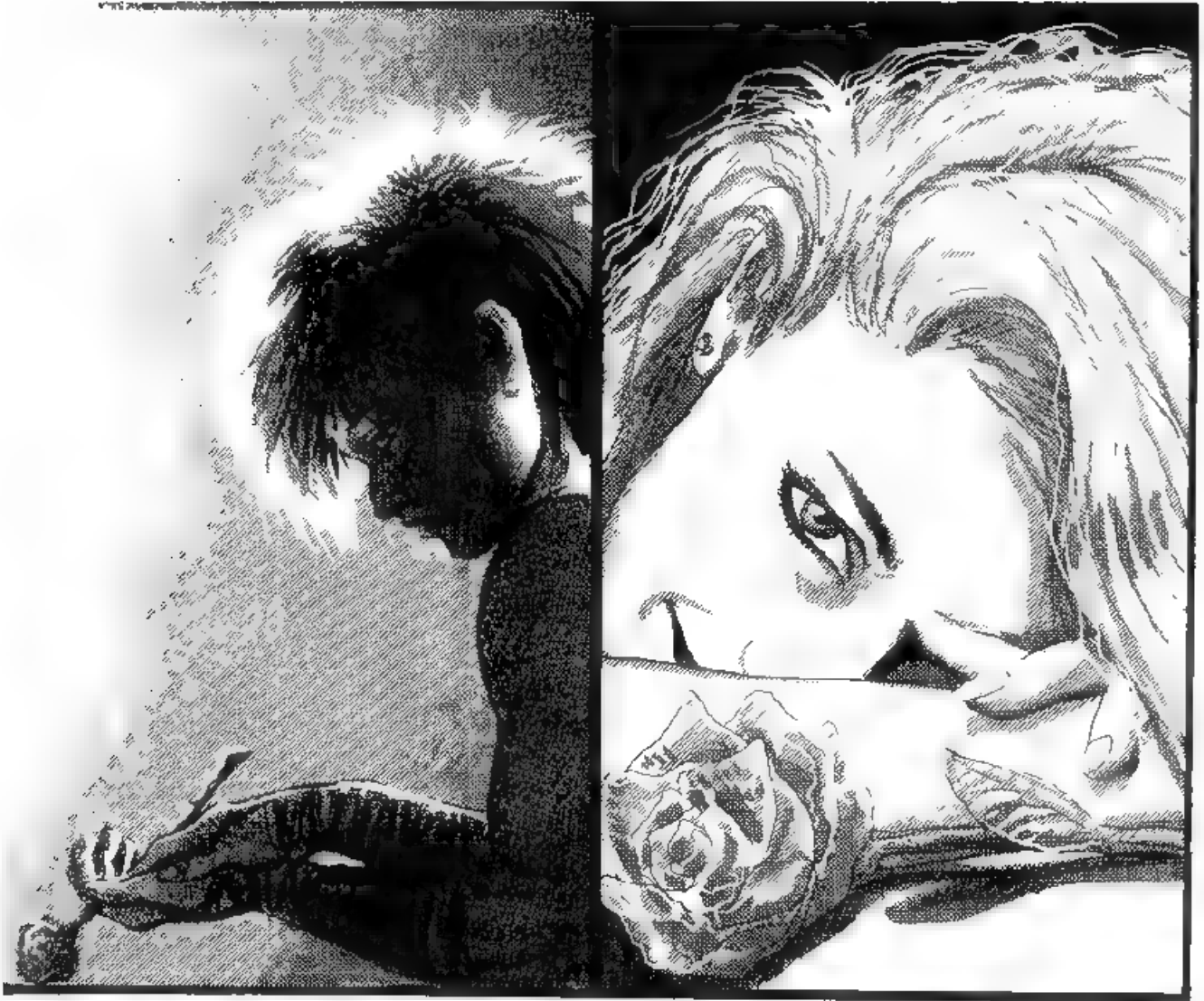


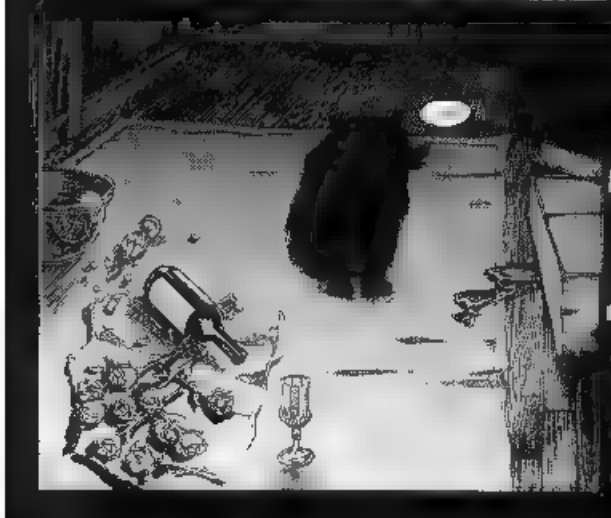




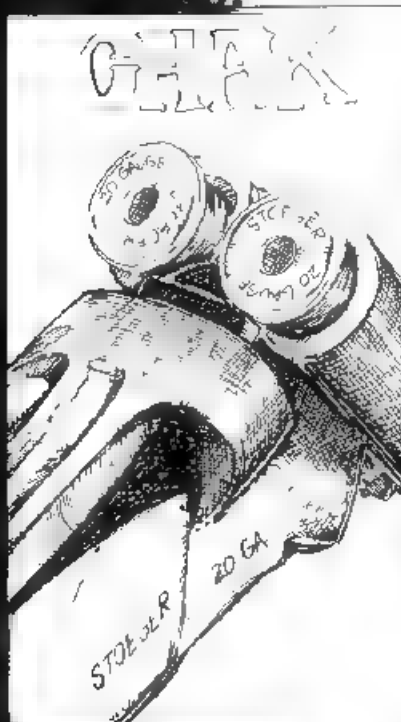




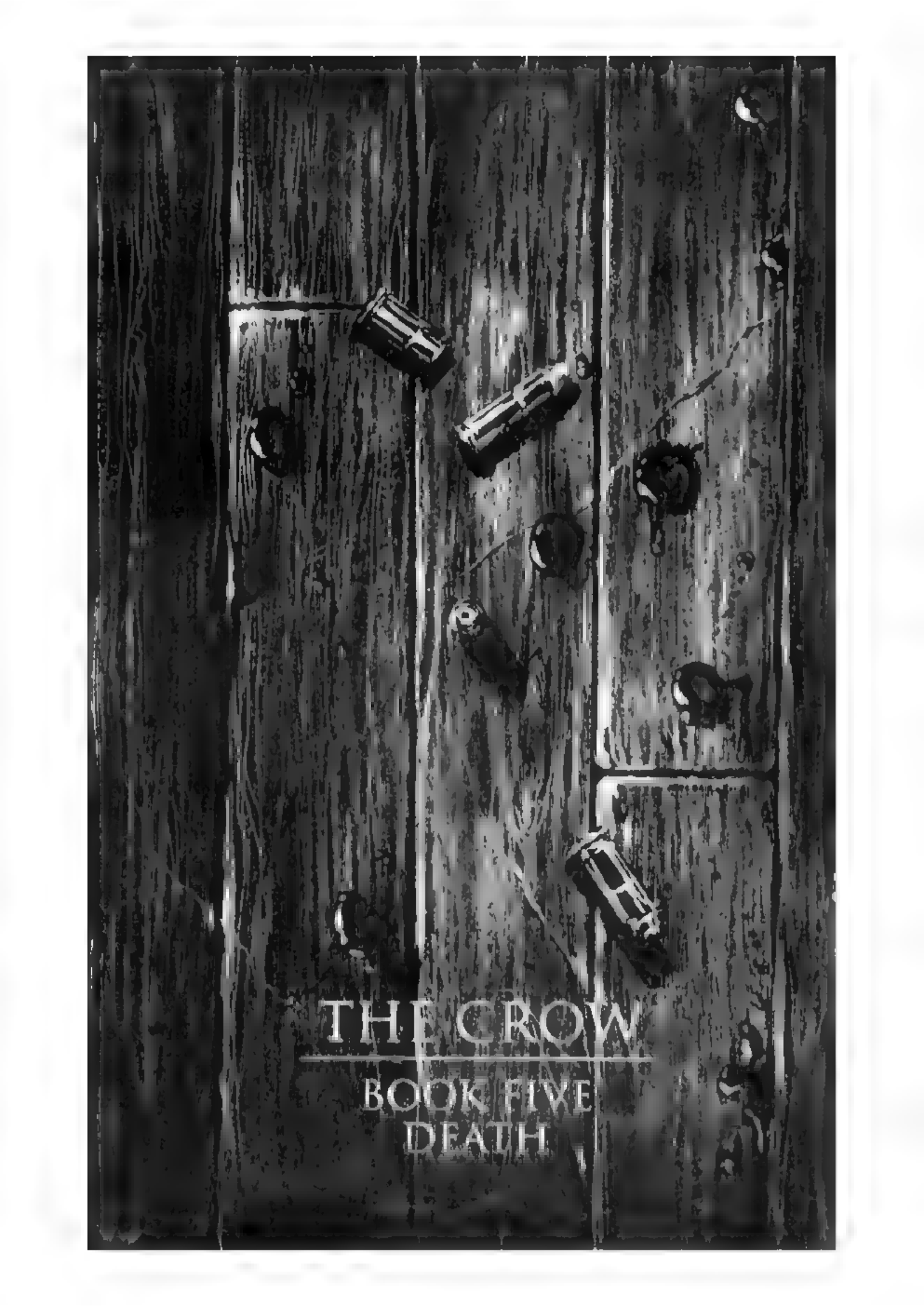












THE CROW

BOOK FIVE
DEATH





I MISSED YOU SO MUCH..



I MISSED YOU TOO PRINCESS..



YOU GOIN' AWAY FOR GOOD THIS TIME, AINT YA?

YES. I'VE SOME AFFAIRS TO PUT IN ORDER AND THEN I'M GOING TO BE WITH SHELLY

BUT YOU SAID SHE WAS..

YES BUT ITS WHERE I BELONGS



I DONT UNDERSTAND BUT I KNOW YOU LOVED HER A WHOLE LOT

MORE THAN WORDS CAN SAY PRINCESS

GUESS YOU SHOULD GO THEN



EVEN IF IT DOES MAKE MY HEART HURT



I'M SORRY..

I'M SORRY FOR EVERY THING THAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU..
AND FOR EVERYTHING THAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU.

PLEASE .
DON'T BE AFRAID,
SHERR.. SOMEDAY
ALL THINGS WILL
BE FAIR AND
THERE WILL BE
WONDERFULL
SURPRISES.

I TRULY DO
BELIEVE THIS.



GOOD BYE, PRINCESS



SEE YOU IN HEAVEN, DOLL



BYE, MISTER CLOWN

I LOVE YOU





DOWNAD
ZERSTORUNG 16
SPECIAL CO

GRAVITY



HEY, UGLY PATRICK,
I THINK YOU'D BETTER
START THINKING ABOUT
THE OTHER SIDE OF
ETERNITY...



WHA?



I AM HE WHO CAN
DISSOLVE THE TERROR
OF BEING A MAN AND
GOING AMONG THE DEAD

I AM MORPHINE
FOR A WOODEN
LEG.

WHAT EVER YOU
HERMAN

BOOM
BOOM

WHY??
CHEMICAL MONS
PUT HIM DOWN

WHAT IS... THE
TWO..??

AMAZIN
WOULD WASTE SKIN
ON TRASH LIKE THAT



AIN' IT A NIGHT, ALBRECT?

WHY?
OH NAH HENRY
I UM



JUST GOT SOME THINGS TO CHECK IN TO...

THE SAID THE
MAY BE

WID THINK





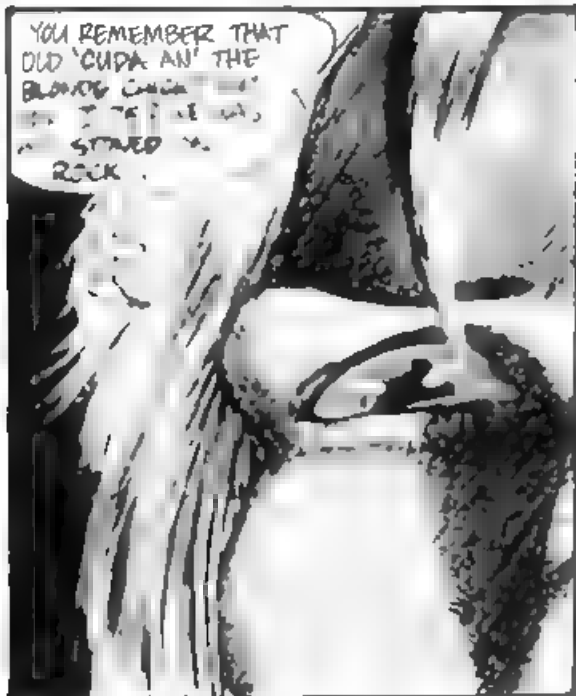
M TELLIN' YA HE KILLED EVERYONE IN THE PLACE, T BIRD.

YOUR NODDIN' WAL'



DAMN STRAIGHT IM ON A NOD AFTER WHAT I SEEN.

SO, THIS IS SOME GUY I SMOKED A YEAR AGO COMIN' BACK FOR REVENGE...



YOU REMEMBER THAT OLD 'CUPA AN' THE BLOWN CIGAR... STAYED IN ROCK.



SOME BODY SOLD YOU SOME BAD DOPE THERE, FUN.

SAY T

...A ... MAN



I TOLD HIM WED MEET
- I'M THERE, ON THE HIGHWAY,
BUT IT DON'T MATTER,
HE KNOWS, MAN HE KNOWS.

FUN BOY, YOU
COME OVER HERE
TALKIN' SHIT BRINGIN
ME DOWN. JUNK
HE GOT ME UP
IC OR HEAD BOY

YOU USED TO BE
PRETTY SMART..
NOW YOU JUST
MAKE ME SICK



YOU
JUNKIES
ARE
PATHETIC

GET OUTTA
HERE, FUN.
NOW.



OK IF I HOOK UP
FIRST?

JESUS CHRIST!
YOU'RE 'BOUT TO
FALL OVER NOW!!
IN THE KITCHEN, OUTTA
MY SIGHT.





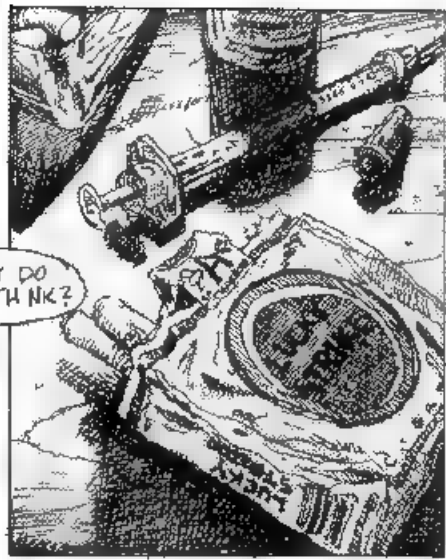


SIT PLEASE.

I PROMISED YOU A PAINLESS DEATH. IT IS TIME

WOULDN'T DO NO GOOD FOR ME TO YELL FOR T-BIRD AND THEM GUYS, WOULD T?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



LISTEN, I CAN'T SAY WHY I DONE THE SHIT I DONE I WISH I COULD SAY I WAS, SORRY BUT I ANT I'M A MONSTER... BURNIN' FROM THE INSIDE...

OBEDIENCE IS SUBMISSION JELLED WITH GRAVITY. I NEVER LET NOTHING DEF ME OR LIMIT ME

FUN BOY, I CANNOT GIVE YOU ABSOLUTION.. IN A FEW MOMENTS YOUR SINS WILL BE BETWEEN GOD AND YOU.

HAVE YOU READ MILTON?

YEAH

LETHE'?

YEAH I UNDERSTAND



HERE IS YOUR MORPHINE, FUN BOY..

DO IT.

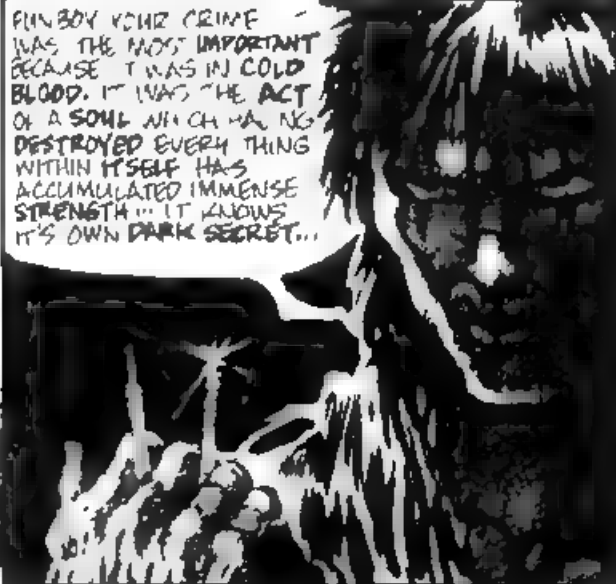


..ALL OF IT. NOW.

THANK YOU GHOST MAN...



PERHAPS I'LL SEE YOU IN HELL..



FUNBOY YOUR CRIME WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT WAS IN COLD BLOOD. IT WAS THE ACT OF A SOUL WHICH HAS DESTROYED EVERY THING WITHIN ITSELF HAS ACCUMULATED IMMENSE STRENGTH... IT KNOWS IT'S OWN DARK SECRET...



...AND THIS CAN BE COMPLETELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE ACTS OF TOTAL DESTRUCTION SOON TO COME

YOU WERE DEAD FROM DAY ONE...

MAN, THAT'S A WHOLE CC OF MED CAL GRADE MORPH YOU JUST PUMPED INTO YOUR HEART!!

WE DO NOT REGRET THE OUR SOULS... IT'S THEY ARE IN PAIN...

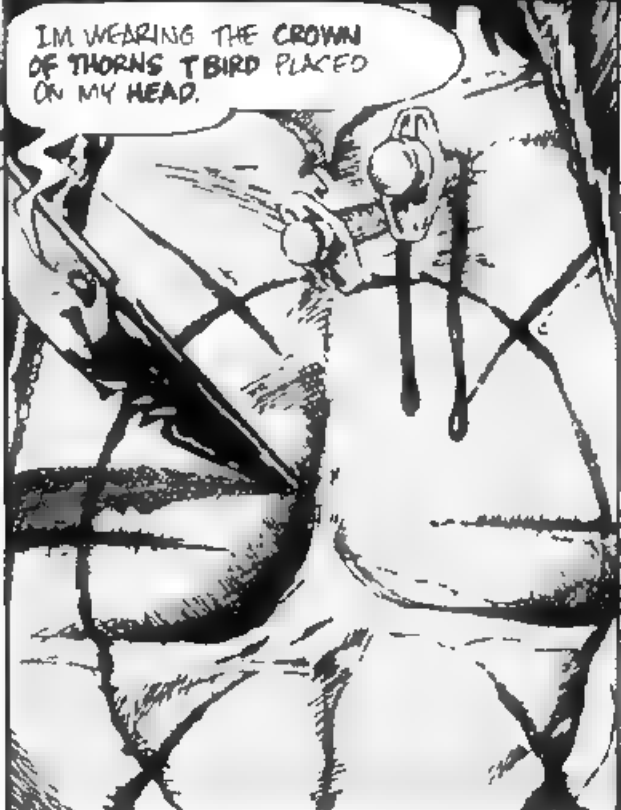


HMMMPH. SPOKEN LIKE A TRUE ANGEL OF DEATH.



THE DIVINE IS NO LESS PARADOXICAL THAN THE VICIOUS

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?



I'M WEARING THE CROWN OF THORNS T BIRD PLACED ON MY HEAD.

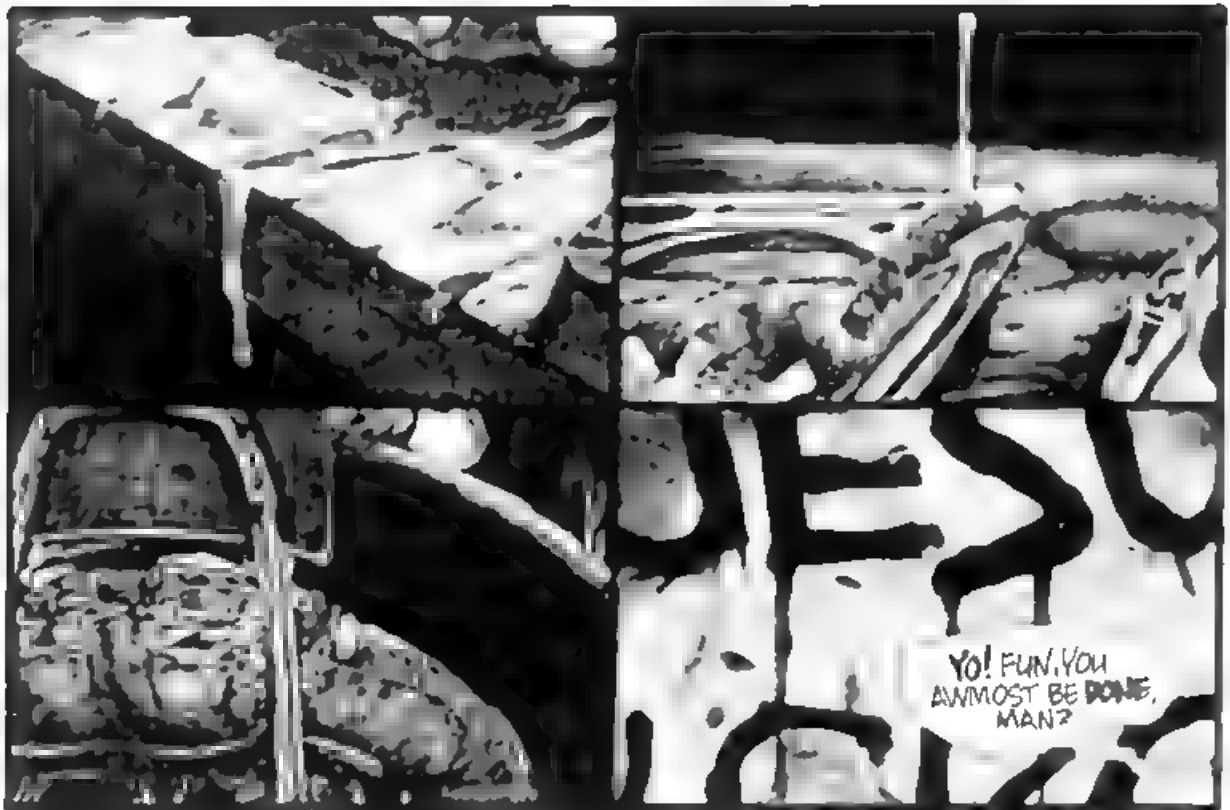


HEH HEH HEH

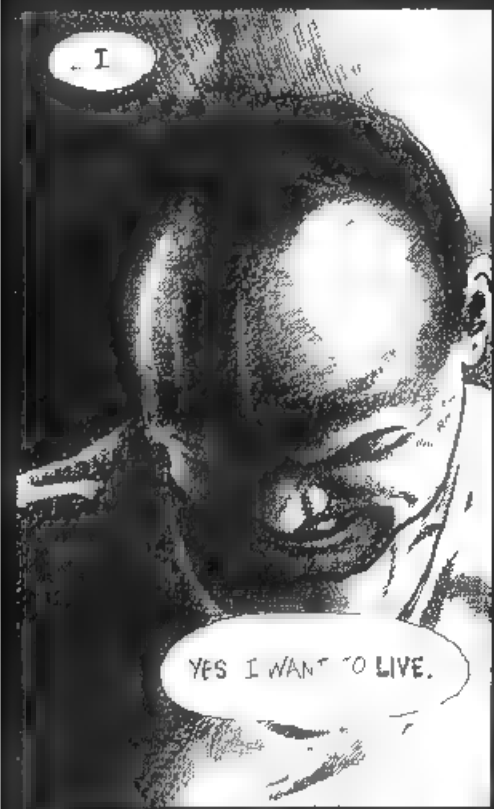
I'LL GIVE LUCIFER YOUR REGARDS, GHOST MAN.

DO ME A FAVOR.. WHEN YOU GET TO T BIRD...

KILL THAT BASTARD SLOW.







I

YES I WANT TO LIVE.



I'VE
ALREADY
TAKEN MY
RIDE IN THE
BIG BLACK
CAR



DO YOU SEE MY SMILE & MY WORDS
SAD OR EVIL SAD BECAUSE I AM
ALONE EVIL BECAUSE I AM
DEAD AND I WANT TO LIVE



ANYONE HEAR ME?

LISTEN

IT WAS ME
WHO KILLS YOU

IT WAS ME
DONT BLAME ME



DONT BLAME ME



YO GUYS HERE
COME T-BIRD AND
SHELBY THE GIANT



WHAT IS IT?

COULD HOW
MANY GUYS YOU
COME UP WITH?



LET ME WHAT I WOULD
A IN THE BRAN E... IT...
... MILL AS...
... OF THERE...

WHAT GOIN' DOWN, T?
'BOVT 20 OF YOUR BEST
... PPER BAGS, MA'.



YOU GETTIN SMART, DUE?

NO MAN, NO... JUS
CURIOUS IS ALL

ALL
PUN BOY...
A GHOST...
JUST
WRECKED...
... BOYT
... HOUR AS...
...
...
... CARRIN

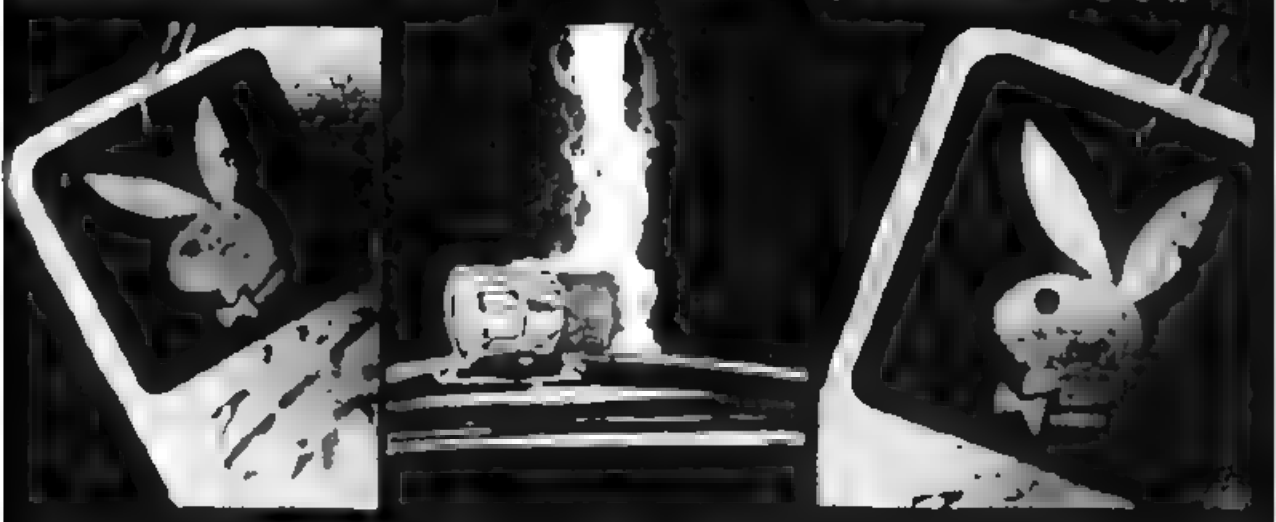
NEED YOU... T



HOW YOU DOIN',
SHELBY?

WHAT'S IT LOOK
LIKE, ASSHOLE.



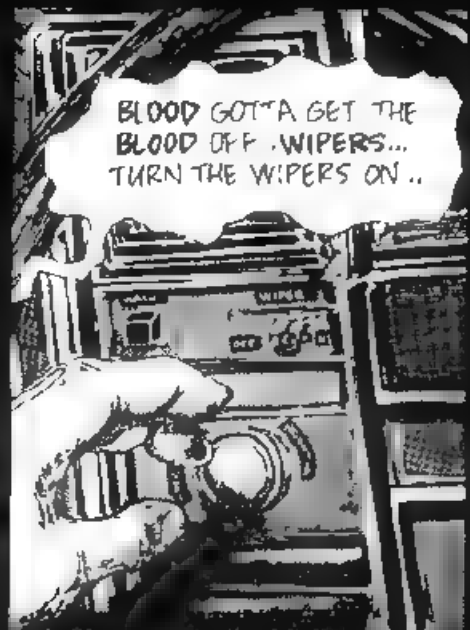




KAKLUNK



JESUS OH JESUS JESUS OH JES



BLOOD GOTTA GET THE BLOOD OFF WIPERS... TURN THE WIPERS ON..



T BIRD ON LOT

SKWEEEE



THE BLOOD MADE

INSIDE THE CAR

INSIDE THE HEAD

OR THE MOMENT

GET OUT
OF THE
CAR
BASTARD

KILL ALL
FOOT SOLDIERS

I WANT YOU
TO SEE THIS

ice age





I THINK THIS HERE'S OUR
MAN COMIN' UP THE
STREET..

HE AIN'T GOT
NO GUNS!!

FOOL.



GENTLE MEN, DON'T YOU
KNOW ENOUGH TO GO IN
OUT OF THE RAIN?



MAN, IT AIN'T
RAININ'

ARE YOU BLIND??
IT'S RAINING BLOOD!!

BUT I D GRESS.



A SKINNY
DARKNESS IN VEINS

THERE'S A CLOCK
THAT NEVER STRIKES



COME TO US

IF NO WEAPONS

WE'LL KILL





"IT'S NOT DEATH
IF YOU REFUSE"

ATTRITION

DETROIT



IT'S JUST A TRICK... CAN'T BE REAL...

WHAT???

SAT

WHERE'D HE GO??!!

HE IN THAT SHADOW OVER THERE!! I SEEN...

NO!! OVER THERE!!



LOOKING DOWN THE CROSS







THIS SOCIETY.

ABSOLVED

CONSECRATED

SANCTIFIED

POSSESSED OF THE DEVIL...



HE A FLOOD OF BLACK CROWS & THE FIBERS OF HIS ATERNAL TREE



SUBMERGED HIM IN A LAST SWELL



AND



TAKING



HIS PLACE



KILLED HIM.



LOVE BITES,
T BIRD?



COME ON KIDS



THIS SNT CALVARY HILL.





ROOM

THAT

...

...

LAST CALL!



FORGET THIS NIGHTMARE!!
I'M OUTTA HERE.



BUCK UP SHE BY,
IT'S THE LAW

MAN YOU STINK!



SO, WHAT DID THE
HOOKER SAY, SHELBY?

SKREEEE



DOES T BIRD KNOW WHERE MRS HEADED?

NO



HE DOESNT KNOW



I

KNOW



Steel tide on an asphalt beach



SO LONG DEE TROT, GOT SOME BROTHERS UP N POINT WIA = N NIGHTMARE HON'T NEVER FIND ME THERE



GODDAMN T SHE (B), GUT F. JPPIN YOUR SI MEY HEAD IN MY CAR! YOU'S MAKIN ME SICK!



I MIGHT TA STOP AN DUMP YOUR DEAD ASS B'UT AIN' NO WAY IM SWWIN' IT FOR NOTHIN'

THAT DUDE AINT NEVER SONNA CATCH...

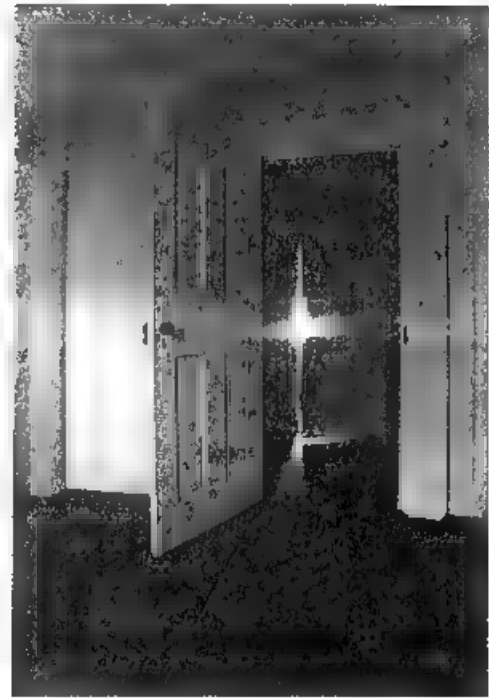


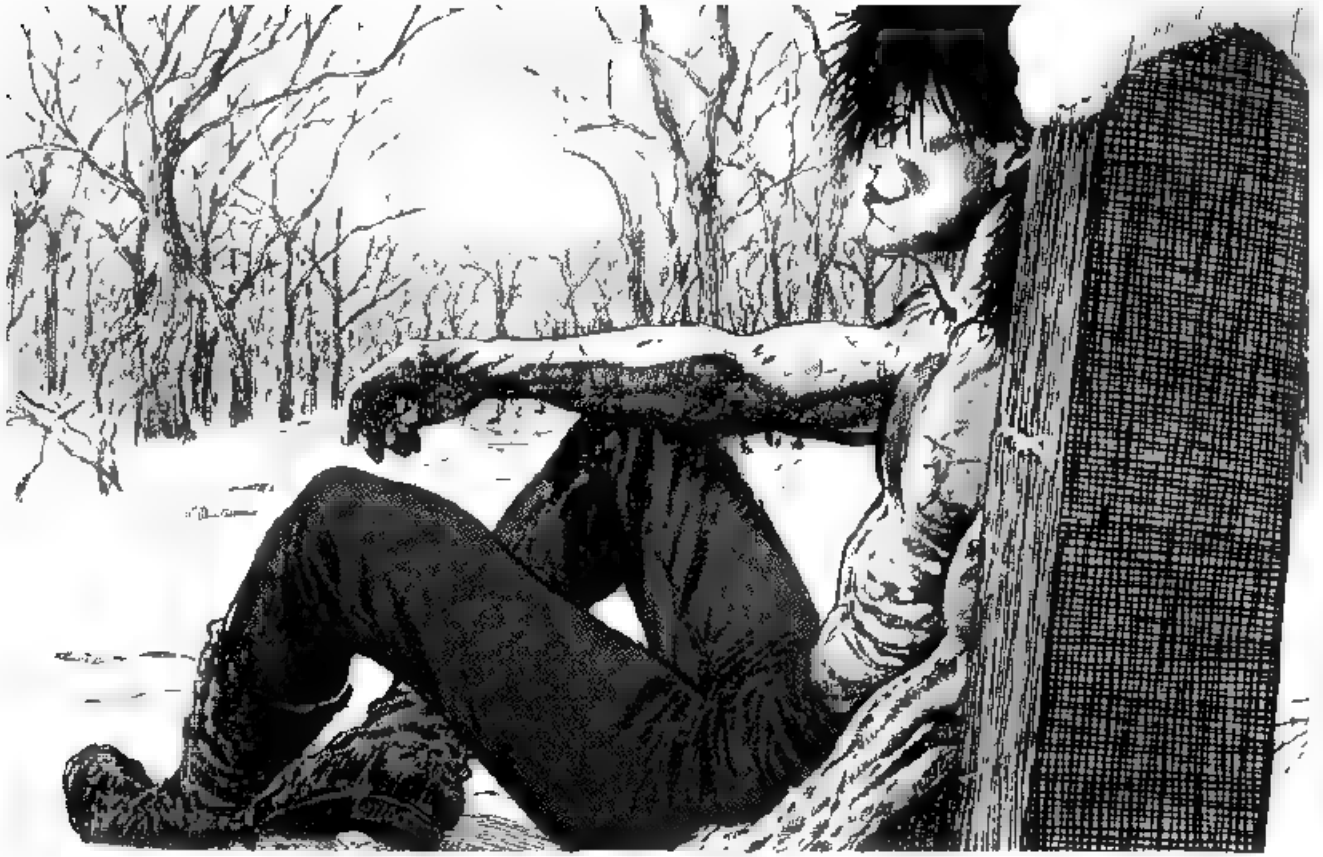




PASSOVER





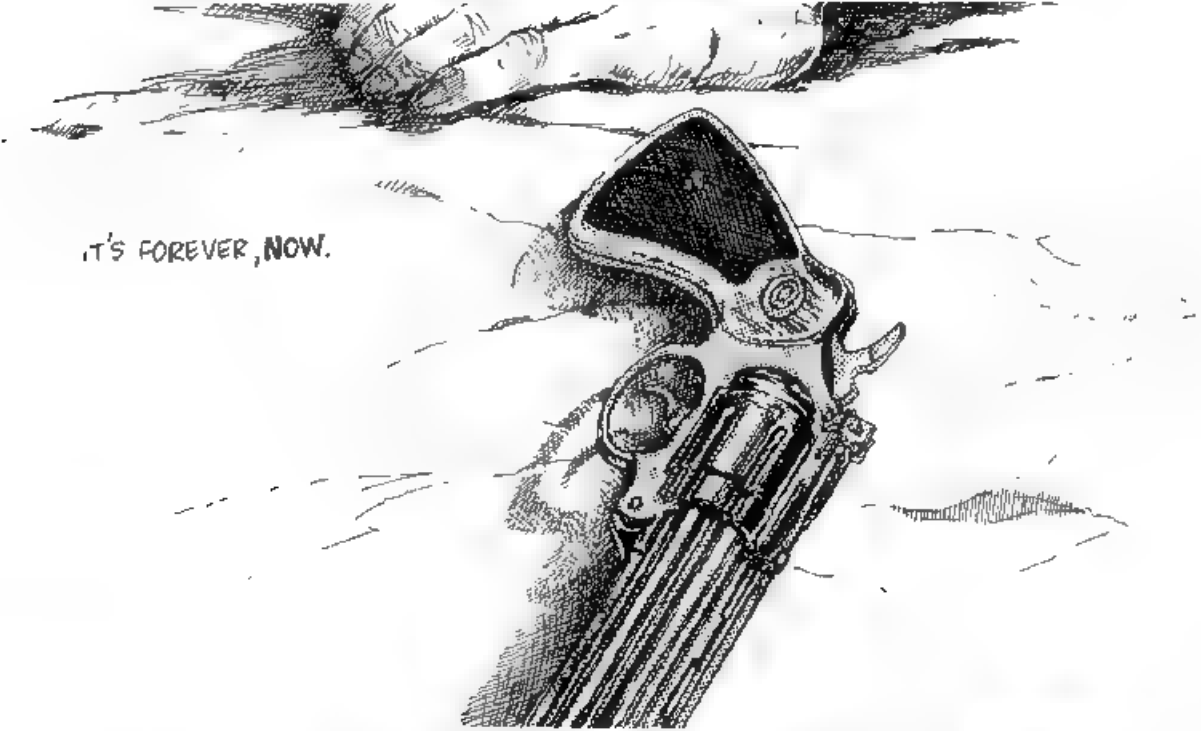






REMEMBER
WHEN YOU SAID
"MINE?" AND I
SAID "FOREVER".

YOU SAID "ONLY
FOREVER?"



IT'S FOREVER, NOW.





END

BEING BEAUTEOUS

Against a fall of snow, a being beautiful, and tall
Whistlings of death and circles of faint music
 Make this adored body, swelling and trembling
 Like a specter, rise...
Black and scarlet gashes burst in the gleaming flesh.
The true colors of life grow dark,
 Shimmer and separate
 In the scaffolding around the vision

Shiverings mutter and rise,
 And the furious taste of these effects is charged
 With deadly whistlings and raucous music
That the world, far between us, hurls up at our mother of beauty .
 She retreats us, she rises up

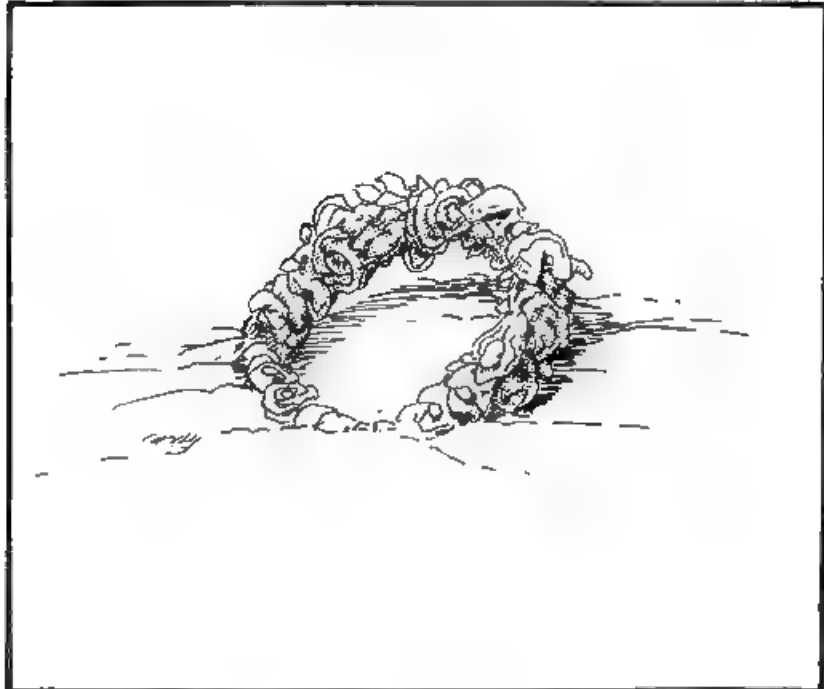
O ash white face

O rousled hair

O crystal arms!

On this cannon I mean to destroy myself
 In a swirling of trees and soft air!

—A. Rimbaud



CODA



FOR A HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS, THE GREATEST OF THE GODS WAS THE CROW, THE DREAM-CARRIER, WHO BROUGHT CIVILIZATION TO THE PEOPLE IN PALEOLITHIC TIMES. MAMMOTH-IVORY CARVINGS FOUND OVER A VAST AREA FROM EUROPE TO THE NEAR EAST DEPICT A GODDESS WITH THE RAPTOR TRAITS OF A CARRION BIRD: THREE-FINGERED TALONS AND A BEAKED FACE - A PREDATOR CROW WITH BREASTS.

ABOUT TEN THOUSAND YEARS AGO, WHEN THE GODDESS BECAME A GOD, THE SAME WINGED OMNIVORE CONTINUED AS CHIEF DEITY ALMOST EVERYWHERE: THE ARCHAIC GREEKS CALLED HIM CRONOS, LITERALLY THE CROW, THE TIRELESS TRAVELLER AND HUNGER MACHINE. THE ROMANS RENAMED SATURN, GOD OF TIME. THE SUN GOD APOLLO, WHOSE NAME MEANS THE DESTROYER, WAS ANOTHER GREEK AVATAR OF THE CROW, AS WAS THE NORSE KING OF THE GODS, ODIN, TO THE CELTS AS WELL AS ABORIGINAL AMERICAN NATIONS. THIS SCAVENGER BIRD CARRIED THE COSMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREAT BENEFACTOR, THE CREATOR OF THE VISIBLE WORLD. THE GERMANIC AND SIBERIAN TRIBES SIMILARLY WORSHIPED THE CROW AS AN ORACULAR HEALER, AND IN CHINA, THE BLACK-FEATHERED PREDATOR WAS THE FIRST OF THE IMPERIAL EMBLEMS, REPRESENTING YANG, THE SUN, AND THE VITALITY OF THE EMPEROR.

DURING MEDIEVAL TIMES, THE SHADOW OF THE SUN WAS HOW EUROPEAN ALCHEMISTS DEFINED THE CROW, THEIR SYMBOL FOR THE ENIGMA OF THE BLACKNESS OF DESPAIR AND ITS POISON-CURE, THE UNITY LATENT IN CHAOS. THAT UNITY IS THE CROW'S RAPTURE, A LIFEFORCE SO POWERFUL IT CAN ACTUALLY LIVE OFF DEATH ITSELF. THAT - AND ITS OUTER SPACE COLOR IN BROAD DAYLIGHT - IS WHAT IMPRESSED THE FIRST PEOPLE. THE CROW IS THE HUNGER OF THE SKY. WHEN IT COMES DOWN, IT EATS EVERYTHING, INCLUDING THE DEAD, AND IT REJECTS NOTHING. IT IS INVULNERABLE. IT IS WIDER THAN TIME.

AT OUR HUMAN LIMITS, WHEN WE'VE GONE AS FAR AS OUR BODIES AND IMAGINATION CAN TAKE US, WE MEET THE ETERNAL ONES, THE POWERS THAT BUILT OUR FLESH OUT OF THE MINERAL ACCIDENTS OF CREATION AND THAT ARE NOW BUILDING OUR INDIVIDUAL FATES OUT OF TIME AND THE ACCIDENTS OF OUR HEARTS. THEY ARE SPACELESS AND TIMELESS AS NUMBERS, AND YET, AS WITH NUMBERS, ALL ORDER IN SPACE AND TIME COMES FROM THEM. IN A GLARE OF EARTHLIGHT, THE CROW EMERGES OUT OF THE SUPER-REAL. HE IS THE APPETITE OF THE ETERNAL ONES FOR THE MORTAL POWERS OF THE WORLD.

J. O'BARR'S THE CROW IS AN EXCARNATION OF THIS CELESTIAL DEVOURER. THIS CROW IS THE SAME MELANCHOLY AVENGER WHO CASTRATED HIS FATHER, KING OF THE MOUNTAINS (URANUS), TEN THOUSAND YEARS AGO IN THE FIRST KINGDOMS, THE BRUTAL ARYAN WARCAMP OF INDO-EUROPE. HE IS IMMEMORIALY OLD - AND INCONSOLABLE, BECAUSE HE IS HIS OWN HADES. GHOSTS DWELL IN HIM. HIS CLOWN-WHITE AND FEMININE FEATURES HARKEN ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE IVORY CROW-GODDESS OF A HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS AGO, THE MAKER AS THE TAKER, THE BLOOD-

DRAINED FACE OF MAMA DEATH. HER GHOST CROWS DESCENDING TO PLUCK THE SOULS FROM OUR CORPSES.

THE BLOOD REMEMBERS THIS. WHAT O'BARR ADDS IS THE ACID-BURN OF CITY APOCALYPSE. THE PHYSICAL DREAD OF OUR ANIMAL GRIEF IN THE ASPHALT CANYONS WHERE DEATH PRETENDS TO BE LIFE. BY THIS IMMEDIACY, O'BARR CREATES ROUGH, SPARE, SINEWY, AND RAPID ARCS OF VISION AND MAKES A SIMPLE SUPERNATURAL TALE OF REVENGE A POISON-CURE TO THE COMPLETE ABSENCE OF IMAGINATION - MINDLESS VIOLENCE.

TEARS, SALTY BLOOD, BONESHARDS AND THE SLUDGE OF BRAINS ATTEND THIS VISION OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL MYSTERY OF THE CROW. IT IS HOW THE DEAD ARE TONGUED WITH FIRE, IT IS AN UNNATURALLY NATURAL WAY TO EXPRESS WHAT THE DEAD HAVE NO SPEECH FOR: SHADOWS OF INK PLAY WITH MOTIONLESS MOTIONS ON THE EMPTINESS OF THE PAGE AND A CROW WAKES IN THE HEART. IT IS AN ILLUSION AND A VOLUPTUOUS TRUTH ABOUT WHY WE ARE UNFINISHED AND CANNOT FLY.

AND, BECAUSE THE HAND REALLY IS NO DIFFERENT FROM WHAT IT CREATES, IT IS ALSO O'BARR'S PERSONAL TRUTH - A RITUAL, DONE FOR US.

AS WITH EVERY TRUE RITUAL, IT IS A KILLING FLOOR. THE MORE SACRED THE RITUAL, THE MORE MESSY AND GRUESOME THE BLOOD-LETTING. SATURN DISEMBOWELED. ODIN PERCED AND HANGING FROM THE STORM TREE. THE CROW CREATING A ZOMBIE TO DESTROY DOZENS OF VIOLENT EVIL LIVES. THIS PURGING OF EVIL IS A PRIMORDIAL FANTASY PROMINENT EVEN AT THE DEEPEST RANGE OF CONSCIOUSNESS - BECAUSE IT IS ROOTED IN THE SUZERAIN TRUTH THAT WE ARE ALL EQUAL BEFORE DEATH. NO MORTAL HAS THE RIGHT TO TAKE ANOTHER'S BODY OR LIFE. YET PEOPLE ARE RAPED AND KILLED EVERY HOUR. THE WHOLE WORLD IS INFECTED, AND THE INNERMOST SECRET SPIRIT INSIDE THE RECESSES OF INERT MATTER WATCHES WITHOUT BLINKING.

THE CROW IS THIS CHTHONIC SPIRIT'S LONG FANTASY. FOUR BILLION YEARS OF RAW FOOD EATEN ALIVE HAS MADE THE ANIMAL MIND WE HAVE INHERITED A WILD, HUNGRY HAPPINESS. LIFE FEEDS VORACIOUSLY ON THE SILENCES OF THE DEAD. BEHOLD OUR SPECIES' RAVENING OF PLANETARY SOURCES. WE ARE ALREADY, ALL OF US, SURVIVORS OF AFTERMATH. IN OUR IGNORANCE AND TAMELESS GREED WE HAVE RAPED AND KILLED THE ONLY WOMAN THE CROW EVER LOVED. NOW HIS SCAR-SPLIT MASK FILLS THE WORLD, AND EACH OF US IS ONE OF HIS CASUALTIES.

A. A. ATTANASIO
HONOLULU 1992



ICH BEDURFNES JESUS CHRISTUS HANGELENK
MEIN GEBEIN WEINEN
ODLAND. KRIEGSBIET LEBENWEISE
GESCHWIND GKEIT HALBMESSER. ABSTEIG
GNAPENSTOB







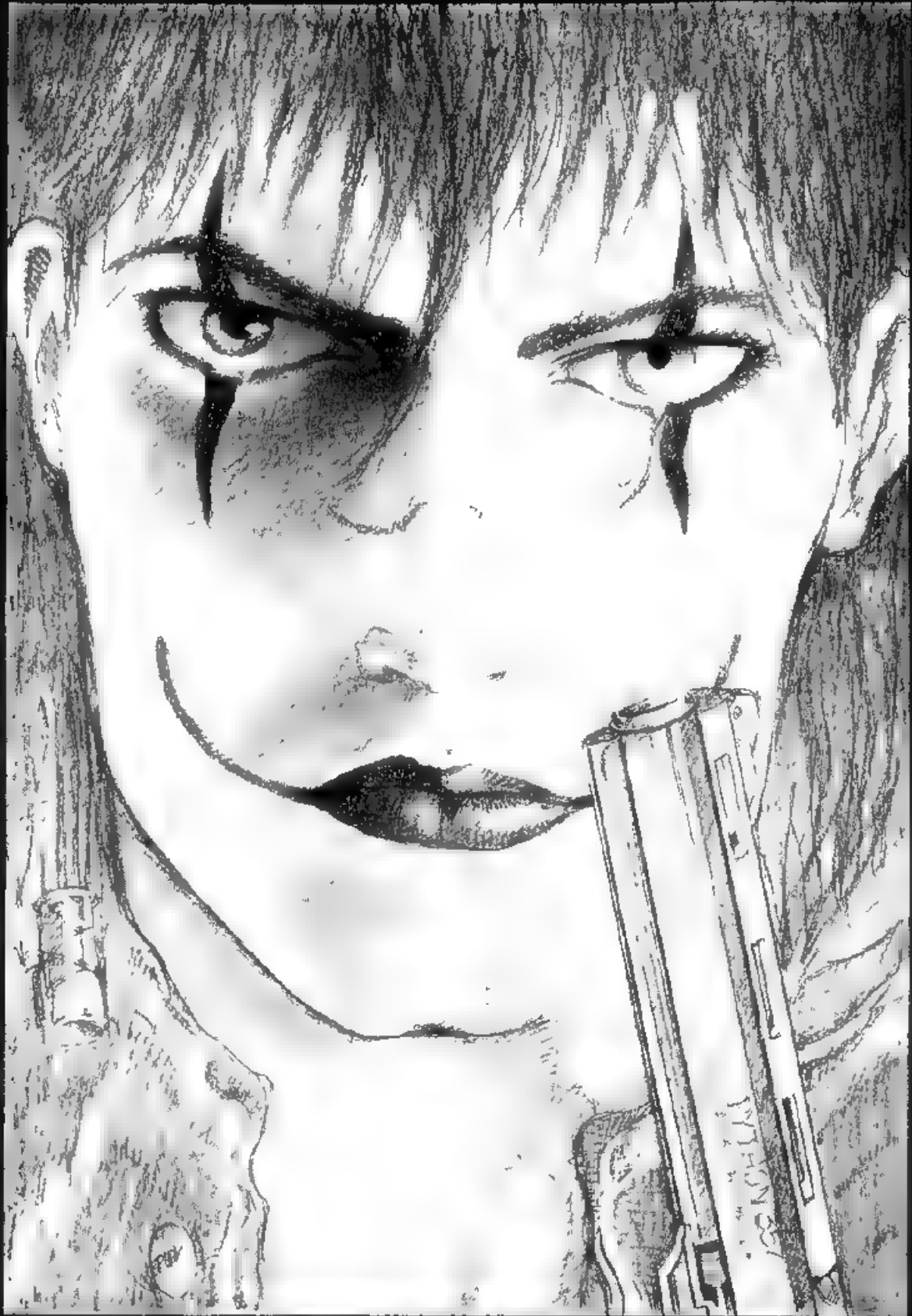
JOHNSON



ANGELS ALL FIRE







DIES IRAE. DIES ILLA.



DECADES

Here are the young men,
A weight on their shoulders
Here are the young men,
Well where have they been?
We knocked on all the doors
Of Hell's darker chambers
Pushed to the limits
We dragged ourselves in
Watched from the wings as
The scenes were replayed
We saw ourselves now as
We never had seen
Portrayal of the traumas and degeneration
The sorrows we suffered
And never were freed
Where have they been?

Weary inside, now our hearts
Lost forever
Can't replace the fear
Or the thrill of the chase
These rituals showed up the door
For our wanderings
Opened and shut, then slammed
In our face
Where have they been?

- JOY DIVISION



"ONE OWES RESPECT TO THE LIVING,
TO THE DEAD ONE OWES ONLY TRUTH."

-VOLTAIRE





SERENDIPITY?





KOMAKINO

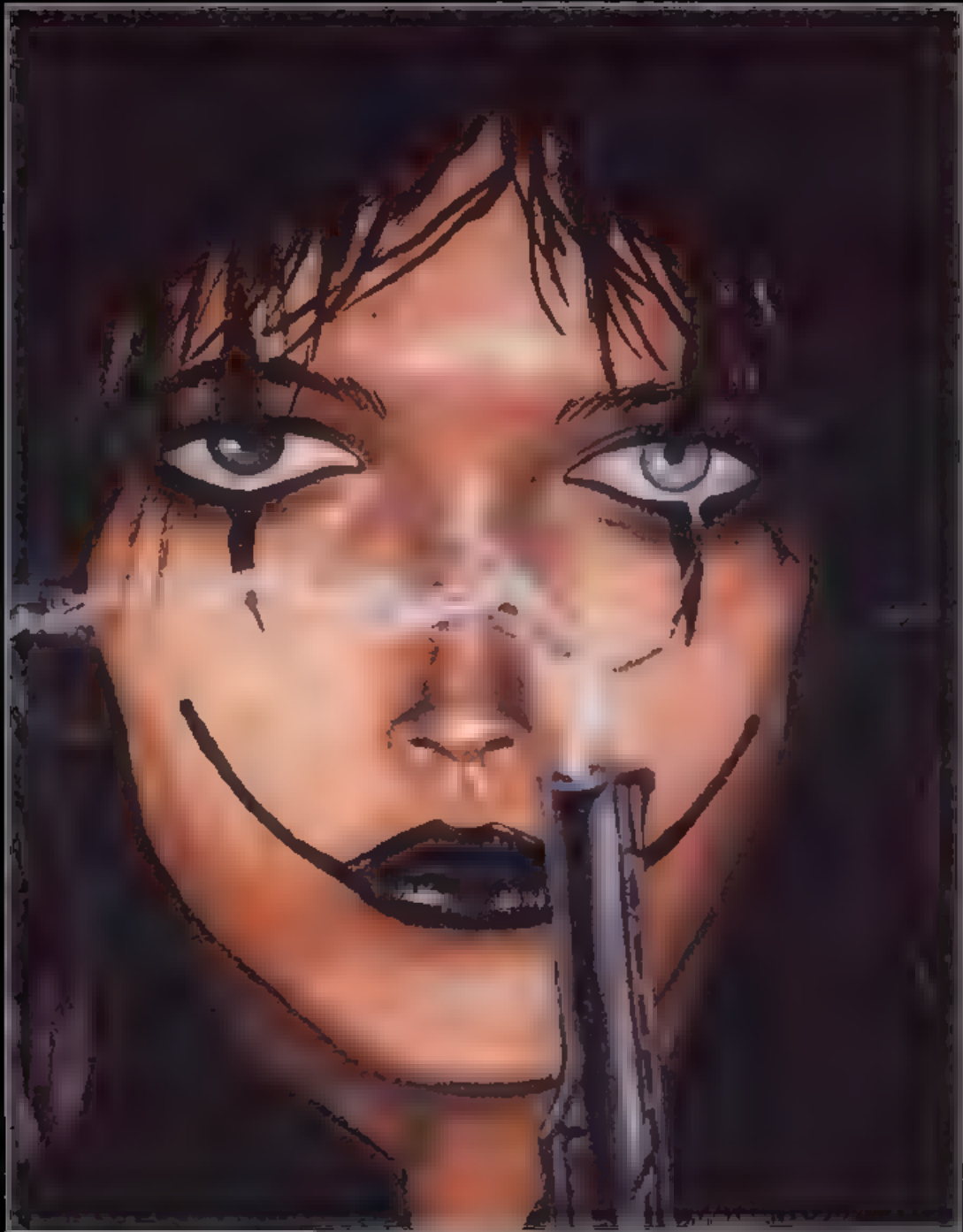
This is the hour when the mysteries emerge
Strangeness so hard to reflect
A moment so moving goes straight
to your heart
Condition that's never been met
The attraction that's held like a wake
deep inside
Something I'll never forget
Pattern is set, the reaction will start
Complete but rejected too soon
Looking ahead in the grip of each tear
Impulse that blinds every move
Shadow that stood by the side of the road
Always reminds me of you
How can I find the right way
to control all the conflicts inside,
All the problems beside
As the questions are right,
and the answers don't fit
Into my way of paying, into my way
of paying



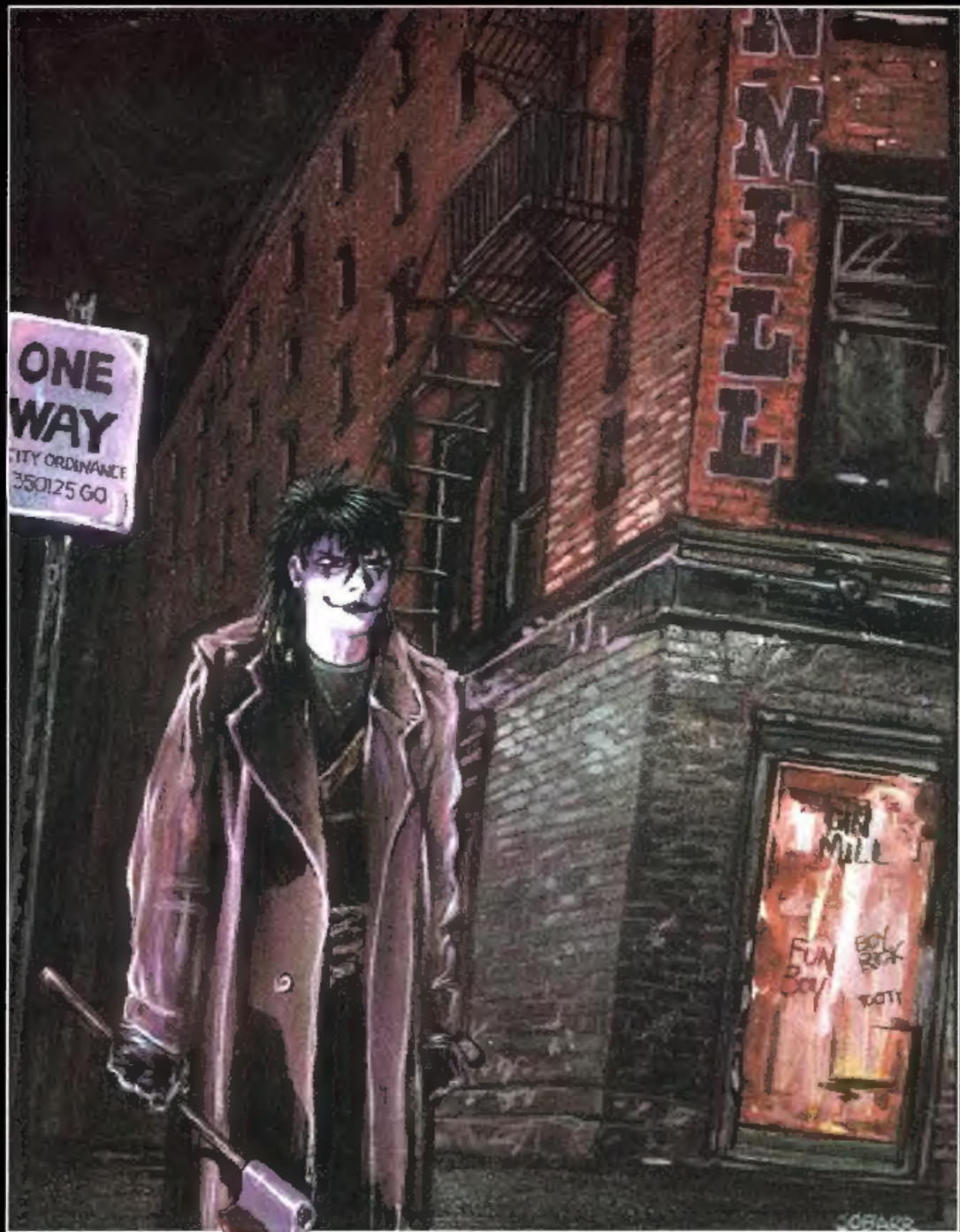




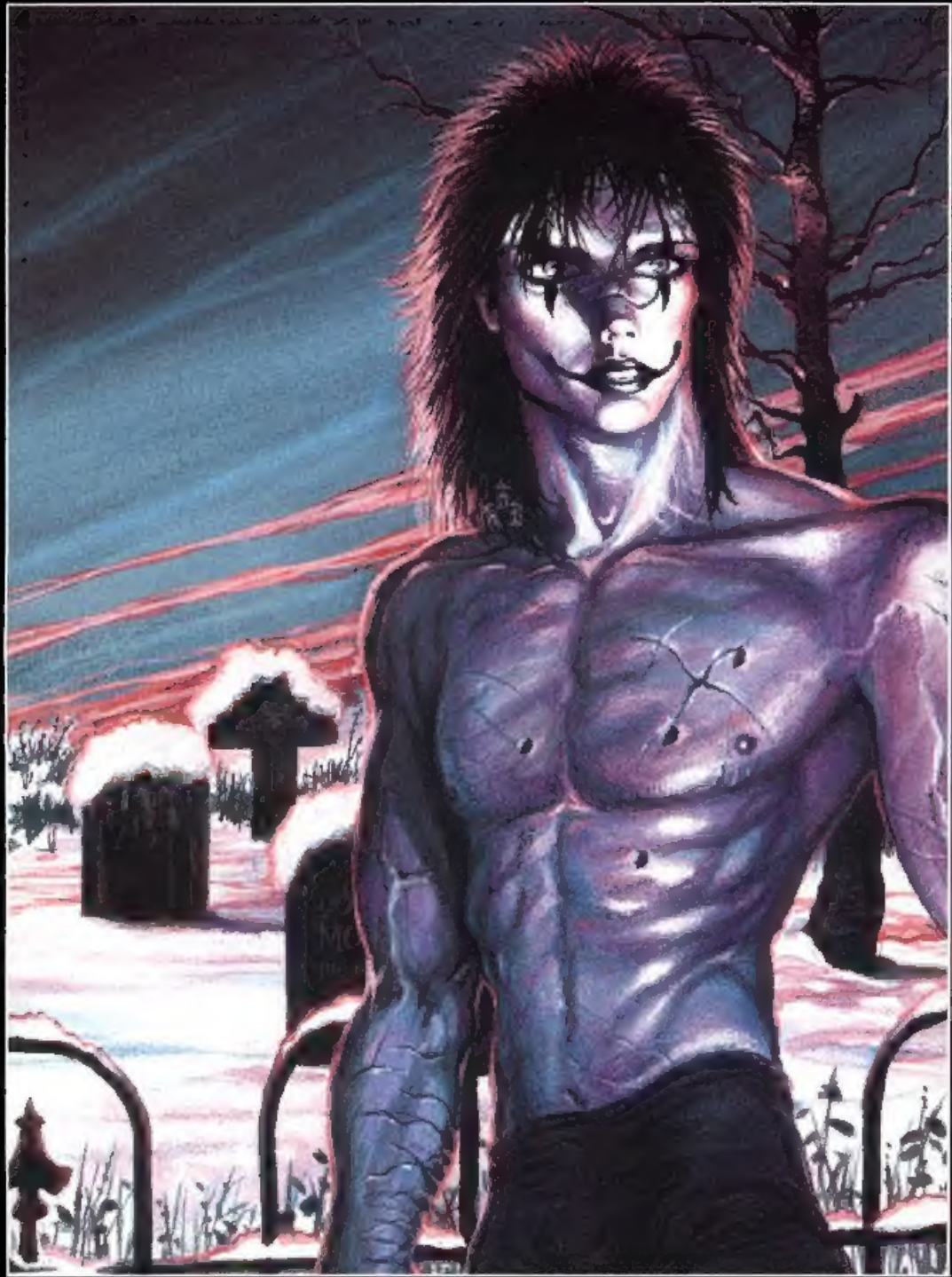












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